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# ODSTOCK.

BY

ALTER SCOTT, BART.

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ADBURY, AGNEW, & CO.

1877.

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LENNIX AND  
ASSOCIATIONS

LONDON :  
BRADBURY, AGNEW, & CO., PRINTERS,  
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chantry, or chapel of King John. The condition of the church and character of the audience both bore witness to the rage of civil war, and the peculiar spirit of the times. The sacred edifice showed many marks of dilapidation. The windows, once filled with stained glass, had been dashed to pieces with pikes and muskets, matters of and pertaining to idolatry. The carving of the reading-desk was damaged, and two fair screens of beautiful sculptured oak had been destroyed, for the same pithy and conclusive reason. The high altar had been removed, and the gilded railing, which was once around it, was broken down and carried off. The effigies of several tombs were mutilated, and now lay scattered about the church,

Torn from their destined niche—unworthy meed  
Of knightly counsel or heroic deed!

The autumn wind piped through empty aisles, in which the remains of stakes and trevisses of rough-hewn timber, as well as a quantity of scattered hay and trampled straw, seemed to intimate that the hallowed precincts had been, upon some late emergency, made the quarters of a troop of horse.

The audience, like the building, was abated in splendour. None of the ancient and habitual worshippers during peaceful times, were now to be seen in their carved galleries, with hands shadowing their brows, while composing their minds to pray where their fathers had prayed, and after the same mode of worship. The eye of the yeoman and peasant sought in vain the tall form of old Sir Henry Lee of Ditchley, as, wrapped in his laced cloak, and with beard and whiskers duly composed, he moved slowly through the aisles, followed by the faithful mastiff, or bloodhound, which in old time had saved his master by his fidelity, and which regularly followed him to church. Bevis, indeed, fell under the proverb which avers, "He is a

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good dog which goes to church ;" for, bating an occasional temptation to warble along with the accord, he behaved himself as decorously as any of the congregation, and returned as much edified, perhaps, as most of them. The damsels of Woodstock looked as vainly for the laced cloaks, jingling spurs, slashed boots, and tall plumes, of the young cavaliers of this and other high-born houses, moving through the streets and the churchyard with the careless ease, which indicates perhaps rather an overweening degree of self-confidence, yet shows graceful when mingled with good humour and courtesy. The good old dames, too, in their white hoods and black velvet gowns—their daughters, "the cynosure of neighbouring eyes,"—where were they all now, who, when they entered the church, used to divide men's thoughts between them and Heaven? "But, ah! Alice Lee—so sweet, so gentle, so condescending in thy loveliness—[thus proceeds a contemporary annalist, whose manuscript we have deciphered]—why is my story to turn upon thy fallen fortunes? and why not rather to the period when, in the very dismounting from your palfrey, you attracted as many eyes as if an angel had descended,—as many blessings as if the benignant being had come fraught with good tidings! No creature wert thou of an idle romancer's imagination—no being fantastically bedizened with inconsistent perfections;—thy merits made me love thee well—and for thy faults—so well did they show amid thy good qualities, that I think they made me love thee better."

With the house of Lee had disappeared from the chantry of King John others of gentle blood and honoured lineage—Freemantles, Winklecombes, Drycote etc. ; for the air that blew over the towers of Oxford was unfavourable to the growth of Puritanism, which was more general in the neighbouring counties.

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were among the congregation, however, one that, by their habits and demeanour, seemed gentlemen of consideration, and there were also some of the notables of the town of Woodstock, or glovers chiefly, whose skill in steel or leather raised them to a comfortable livelihood. These taries wore long black cloaks, plaited close at neck, and, like peaceful citizens, carried their and memorandum-books at their girdles, instead knife or sword. This respectable, but least numerous part of the audience, were such decent persons as adopted the Presbyterian form of faith, renouncing the liturgy and hierarchy of the Church of England, and living under the tuition of the Rev. Nehemiah Holdenough, much famed for the length and strength of his powers of predication. With these grave seniors sat their goodly dames in ruff and gorget, like the portraits which in catalogues of paintings are designed "wife of a burgomaster;" and their pretty daughters, whose study, like that of Chaucer's physician, was not always in the Bible, but who were, on the contrary, when a glance could escape the vigilance of their honoured mothers, inattentive themselves, and the cause of inattention in others.

But, besides these dignified persons, there were in the church a numerous collection of the lower orders, some brought thither by curiosity, but many of them unwashed artificers, bewildered in the theological discussions of the time, and of as many various sects as there are colours in the rainbow. The presumption of these learned Thebans being in exact proportion to their ignorance, the last was total and the first boundless. Their behaviour in the church was anything but reverential or edifying. Most of them affected a cynical contempt for all that was only held sacred by human sanction—the church was to these men but a steeple-house, the clergy



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man, an ordinary person ; her ordinances, dry bran and sapless pottage, unfitted for the spiritualised palates of the saints, and the prayer, an address to Heaven, to which each acceded or not as in his too critical judgment he conceived fit.

The elder amongst them sat or lay on the benches, with their high steeple-crowned hats pulled over their severe and knitted brows, waiting for the Presbyterian parson, as mastiffs sit in dumb expectation of the bull that is to be brought to the stake. The younger mixed, some of them, a bolder license of manners with their heresies ; they gazed round on the women, yawned, coughed, and whispered, ate apples, and cracked nuts, as if in the gallery of a theatre ere the piece commences.

Besides all these, the congregation contained a few soldiers, some in corselets and steel caps, some in buff, and others in red coats. These men of war had their bandoleers, with ammunition, slung round them, and rested on their pikes and muskets. They, too, had their peculiar doctrines on the most difficult points of religion, and united the extravagances of enthusiasm with the most determined courage and resolution in the field. The burghers of Woodstock looked on these military saints with no small degree of awe ; for though not often sullied with deeds of plunder or cruelty, they had the power of both absolutely in their hands, and the peaceful citizens had no alternative, save submission to whatever the ill-regulated and enthusiastic imaginations of their martial guides might suggest.

After some time spent in waiting for him, Mr. Hold-enough began to walk up the aisles of the chapel, not with the slow and dignified carriage with which the old Rector was of yore wont to maintain the dignity of the surplice, but with a hasty step, like one who arrives late at an appointment, and bustles forward for the best use of his time. He was a tall, thin man, with a

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adust complexion, and the vivacity of his eye indicated some irascibility of temperament. His dress was brown, not black, and over his other vestments he wore, in honour of Calvin, a Geneva cloak of a blue colour, which fell backwards from his shoulders as he posted on to the pulpit. His grizzled hair was cut as short as shears could perform the feat, and covered with a black silk skull-cap, which stuck so close to his head, that the two ears expanded from under it as if they had been intended as handles by which to lift the whole person. Moreover, the worthy divine wore spectacles, and a long grizzled peaked beard, and he carried in his hand a small pocket-bible with silver clasps. Upon arriving at the pulpit, he paused a moment to take breath, then began to ascend the steps by two at a time.

But his course was arrested by a strong hand, which seized his cloak. It was that of one who had detached himself from the group of soldiery. He was a stout man of middle stature, with a quick eye, and a countenance, which, though plain, had yet an expression that fixed the attention. His dress, though not strictly military, partook of that character. He wore large hose made of calves-leather, and a tuck, as it was then called, or rapier, of tremendous length, balanced on the other side by a dagger. The belt was morocco, garnished with pistols.

The minister, thus intercepted in his duty, faced round upon the party who had seized him, and demanded, in no gentle tone, the meaning of the interruption.

"Friend," quoth the intruder, "is it thy purpose to hold forth to these good people?"

"Ay, marry is it," said the clergyman, "and 'tis my bounden duty. Woe to me if I preach not truth—*Prithee, friend, let me not in my labour*"—

"*Nay,*" said the man of warlike mien, "*I am minded to hold forth; therefore, do thou*"

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thou wilt do by mine advice, remain and fructify with those poor goslings, to whom I am presently about to shake forth the crumbs of comfortable doctrine."

"Give place, thou man of Satan," said the priest, waxing wroth; "respect mine order—my cloth."

"I see no more to respect in the cut of thy cloak, or in the cloth of which it is fashioned," said the other, "than thou didst in the Bishop's rochets—they were black and white, thou art blue and brown. Sleeping dogs, every one of you, lying down, loving to slumber—shepherds that starve the flock but will not watch it, each looking to his own gain—hum."

Scenes of this indecent kind were so common at the time, that no one thought of interfering; the congregation looked on in silence, the better class scandalised, and the lower orders, some laughing, and others backing the soldier or minister as their fancy dictated. Meantime the struggle waxed fiercer; Mr. Holdenough clamoured for assistance.

"Master Mayor of Woodstock," he exclaimed, "wilt thou be among those wicked magistrates who bear the sword in vain?—Citizens, will you not help your pastor?—Worthy Aldermen, will you see me strangled on the pulpit stairs by this man of buff and Belial?—But lo, I will overcome him, and cast his cords from me."

As Holdenough spoke, he struggled to ascend the pulpit stairs, holding hard on the banisters. His tormentor held fast by the skirts of the cloak, which went nigh to the choking of the wearer, until, as he spoke the words last mentioned, in a half-strangled voice, Mr. Holdenough dexterously slipped the string which tied it round his neck, so that the garment suddenly gave way; the soldier fell backwards down the steps, and the liberated divine skipped into the pulpit, and began to sing forth a psalm of triumph over his prostrate adversary. But a great hubbub in the church marred his exult-

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and although he and his faithful clerk continued to sing the hymn of victory, their notes were only heard by the wind like the whistle of a curlew during a gale of wind.

The cause of the tumult was as follows :—The Mayor was a zealous Presbyterian, and witnessed the intrusion of the soldier with great indignation from the very beginning, though he hesitated to interfere with an able man while on his legs and capable of resistance. But sooner did he behold the champion of independence sprawling on his back, with the divine Geneva cloak fluttering in his hands, than the magistrate rushed forward, exclaiming that such insolence was not to be endured, and ordered his constables to seize the prostrate champion, proclaiming, in the magnanimity of wrath, "I will commit every red-coat of them all—I will commit him were he Noll Cromwell himself!"

The worthy Mayor's indignation had overmastered his reason when he made this mistimed vaunt; for three soldiers, who had hitherto stood motionless like statues, made each a stride in advance, which placed them betwixt the municipal officers and the soldier, who was in the act of rising; then making at once the movement of resting arms according to the manual as then practised, their musket-buts rang on the church pavement, within an inch of the gouty toes of Master Mayor. The energetic magistrate, whose efforts in favour of order were thus checked, cast one glance on his supporters, but that was enough to show him that force was not on his side. All had shrunk back on hearing that ominous clatter of stone and iron. He was obliged to descend to expostulation.

"What do you mean, my masters?" he said; "is it like a decent and God-fearing soldiery, who have wrought such things for the land as have never before been heard of, to brawl and riot in the church, or to aid, abet, and comfort a profane fellow, who hath, upon a solemn

Thanksgiving, excluded the minister from his own pulpit?"

"We have nought to do with thy church, as thou call'st it," said he who, by a small feather in front of his morion, appeared to be the corporal of the party;—"we see not why men of gifts should not be heard within these citadels of superstition, as well as the voice of the men of crape of old, and the men of cloak now. Wherefore, we will pluck yon Jack Presbyter out of his wooden sentinel-box, and our own watchman shall relieve the guard, and mount thereon, and cry aloud and spare not."

"Nay, gentlemen," said the Mayor, "if such be your purpose, we have not the means to withstand you, being, as you see, peaceful and quiet men—But let me first speak with this worthy minister, Nehemiah Holdenough, to persuade him to yield up his place for the time without farther scandal."

The peace-making Mayor then interrupted the quavering of Holdenough and the clerk, and prayed both to retire, else there would, he said, be certainly strife.

"Strife!" replied the Presbyterian divine, with scorn; "no fear of strife among men that dare not testify against this open profanation of the Church, and daring display of heresy. Would your neighbours of Banbury have brooked such an insult?"

"Come, come, Master Holdenough," said the Mayor, "put us not to mutiny and cry Clubs. I tell you once more, we are not men of war or blood."

"Not more than may be drawn by the point of a needle," said the preacher, scornfully.—"Ye tailors of Woodstock!—for what is a glover but a tailor working on kidskin?—I forsake you, in scorn of your faint hearts and feeble hands, and will seek me elsewhere a flock which will not fly from their shepherd at the braying of the first wild ass which cometh from out the great desert."

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So saying, the aggrieved divine departed from the pulpit, and shaking the dust from his shoes, left the church as hastily as he had entered it, though for a different reason for his speed. The citizens saw with retreat with sorrow, and not without a compunctious feeling, as if conscious that they were not playing the most courageous part in the world. The Mayor and several others left the church, to follow and accompany him.

The independent orator, late prostrate, was now umphant, and inducting himself into the pulpit without further ceremony, he pulled a Bible from his pocket, selected his text from the forty-fifth psalm,—“Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty : and in thy majesty ride prosperously.”

—Upon this theme, he commenced one of those wild declamations common at the period, in which men were accustomed to wrest and pervert the language of Scripture, by adapting it to modern events. The language which, in its literal sense, was applied to King David, and typically referred to the coming of the Messiah, was, in the opinion of the military orator, most properly to be interpreted of Oliver Cromwell, the victorious general of the infant Commonwealth, which was never destined to come of age. “Gird on thy sword !” exclaimed the preacher, emphatically ; “and was not that a pretty bit of steel as ever dangled from a corselet, or rung against a steel saddle? Ay, ye prick up your ears now, ye cutlers of Woodstock, as if ye should know something of a good fox broadsword—Did you forge it, I trow?—was the steel quenched with water from Rosamond’s well, or the blade blest by the old cuckoldy priest of Godstow?

*You would have us think, I warrant me, that you wrought it and welded it, grinded and polished it, and all the while it never came on a Woodstock stithy ! You were all too busy making whittles for the lazy crape-men of*

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**Oxford, bouncing priests, whose eyes were so closed up with fat, that they could not see Destruction till she had them by the throat. But I can tell you where the sword was forged, and tempered, and welded, and grinded, and polished. When you were, as I said before, making whittles for false priests, and daggers for dissolute G—d—n me cavaliers, to cut the people of England's throats with—it was forged at Long Marston Moor, where blows went faster than ever rung hammer on anvil—and it was tempered at Naseby, in the best blood of the cavaliers—and it was welded in Ireland against the walls of Drogheda—and it was grinded on Scottish lives at Dunbar—and now of late it was polished in Worcester, till it shines as bright as the sun in the middle heaven, and there is no light in England that shall come nigh unto it."**

Here the military part of the congregation raised a hum of approbation, which, being a sound like the "hear, hear," of the British House of Commons, was calculated to heighten the enthusiasm of the orator, by intimating the sympathy of the audience. "And then," resumed the preacher, rising in energy as he found that his audience partook in these feelings, "what saith the text?—Ride on prosperously—do not stop—do not call a halt—do not quit the saddle—pursue the scattered fliers—sound the trumpet—not a levant or a flourish, but a point of war—sound, boot and saddle—to horse and away—a charge!—follow after the young Man!—what part have we in him?—Slay, take, destroy, divide the spoil! Blessed art thou, Oliver, on account of thine honour—thy cause is clear, thy call is undoubted—never has defeat come near thy leading-staff, nor disaster attended thy banner. Ride on, flower of England's soldiers! ride on, chosen leader of God's champions! gird up the loins of thy resolution, and be steadfast to the mark of thy high calling!"

Another deep and stern hum, echoed by the ancients

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embow'd arches of the old chantry, gave him an opportunity of an instant's repose ; when the people of Woodstock heard him, and not without anxiety, turn the stream of his oratory into another channel.

" But, wherefore, ye people of Woodstock, do I say these things to you, who claim no portion in our David, no interest in England's son of Jesse?—You, who were fighting as well as your might could (and it was not very formidable) for the late Man, under that old bloodthirsty papist, Sir Jacob Aston—are you not now plotting, or ready to plot, for the restoring, as ye call it, of the young Man, the unclean son of the slaughtered tyrant—the fugitive after whom the true hearts of England are now following, that they may take and slay him?—' Why should your rider turn his bridle our way?' say you in your hearts ; ' we will none of him ; if we may help ourselves, we will rather turn us to wallow in the mire of monarchy, with the sow that was washed but newly.' Come, men of Woodstock, I will ask, and do you answer me. Hunger ye still after the flesh-pots of the monks of Godstow? and ye will say, Nay ;—but wherefore, except that the pots are cracked and broken, and the fire is extinguished wherewith thy oven used to boil? And again, I ask, drink ye still of the well of the fornications of the fair Rosamond?—ye will say, Nay,—but wherefore? "——

Here the orator, ere he could answer the question in his own way, was surprised by the following reply, ver pithily pronounced by one of the congregation :—" P cause you, and the like of you, have left us no brandy mix with it."

All eyes turned to the audacious speaker, who beside one of the thick sturdy Saxon pillars. *himself somewhat resembled, being short of very strongly made, a squat broad Little figure, leaning on a quarterstaff, and wear*



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which, though now sorely stained and discoloured, had once been of the Lincoln green, and showed remnants of having been laced. There was an air of careless, good-humoured audacity about the fellow ; and, though under military restraint, there were some of the citizens who could not help crying out,—“ Well said, Joceline Joliffe ! ”

“ Jolly Joceline, call ye him ? ” proceeded the preacher, without showing either confusion or displeasure at the interruption,—“ I will make him Joceline of the jail, if he interrupts me again. One of your park-keepers, I warrant, that can never forget they have borne C. R. upon their badges and bugle-horns, even as a dog bears his owner’s name on his collar—a pretty emblem for Christian men ! But the brute beast hath the better of him,—the brute wareth his own coat, and the caitiff thrall wears his master’s. I have seen such a wag make a rope’s end wag ere now.—Where was I ?—Oh, rebuking you for your backslidings, men of Woodstock.—Yes, then, ye will say ye have renounced Popery, and ye have renounced Prelacy, and then ye wipe your mouths like Pharisees, as ye are ! and who but you for purity of religion ! But, I tell you, ye are but like Jehu the son of Nimshi, who broke down the house of Baal, yet departed not from the sins of Jeroboam. Even so ye eat not fish on Friday with the blinded Papists, nor minced-pies on the 25th day of December, like the slothful Prelatists ; but ye will gorge on sack-posset each night in the year with your blind Presbyterian guide, and ye will speak evil of dignities, and revile the Commonwealth ; and ye will glorify yourselves in your park of Woodstock, and say, “ Was it not walled in first of any other in England, and that by Henry son of William called the Conqueror ? ” And ye have a princely Lodge therein, and call the same a Royal Lodge ; and ye see an oak which ye call the King’s Oak ; and ye see

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eat the venison of the park, and ye say, 'This is the king's venison, we will wash it down with a cup to the king's health—better we eat it than those roundheaded Commonwealth knaves.' But listen unto me and take warning. For these things come we to controversy with you. And our name shall be a cannon-shot, before which your Lodge, in the pleasantness whereof ye take pastime, shall be blown into ruins ; and we will be as a wedge to split asunder the King's Oak into billets to heat a brown baker's oven ; and we will dispark your park, and slay your deer, and eat them ourselves, neither shall you have any portion thereof, whether in neck or haunch. Ye shall not haft a tenpenny knife with the horns thereof, neither shall ye cut a pair of breeches out of the hide, for all ye be cutlers and glovers ; and ye shall have no comfort or support neither from the sequestered traitor Henry Lee, who called himself Ranger of Woodstock, nor from any on his behalf ; for they are coming hither who shall be called Maher-shalal-hash-baz, because he maketh haste to the spoil."

Here ended this wild effusion, the latter part of which fell heavy on the souls of the poor citizens of Woodstock, as tending to confirm a report of an unpleasing nature which had been lately circulated. The communication with London was indeed slow, and the news which it transmitted were uncertain ; no less uncertain were the times themselves, and the rumours which were circulated, exaggerated by the hopes and fears of so many various factions. But the general stream of report, far as Woodstock was concerned, had of late run uniformly in one direction. Day after day they had been informed, that the fatal fiat of Parliament had gone for selling the park of Woodstock, destroying its *disparking its forest*, and erasing, as far as they could, *all traces of its ancient fame*. Many *citizens were likely to be sufferers on this occasion*


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several of them enjoyed, either by sufferance or right, various convenient privileges of pasturage, cutting fire-wood, and the like, in the royal chase ; and all the inhabitants of the little borough were hurt to think, that the scenery of the place was to be destroyed, its edifices ruined, and its honours rent away. This is a patriotic sensation often found in such places, which ancient distinctions and long-cherished recollections of former days, render so different from towns of recent date. The natives of Woodstock felt it in the fullest voice. They had trembled at the anticipated calamity ; but now, when it was announced by the appearance of those dark, stern, and at the same time omnipotent soldiers—now that they heard it proclaimed by the mouth of one of their military preachers—they considered their fate as inevitable. The causes of disagreement among themselves were for the time forgotten, as the congregation, dismissed without psalmody or benediction, went slowly and mournfully homeward, each to his own place of abode.

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## CHAP. II.

*Come forth, old man—Thy daughter's side  
Is now the fitting place for thee :  
When time hath quell'd the oak's bold pride,  
The youthful tendril yet may hide  
The ruins of the parent tree.*

HEN the sermon was ended, the military orator wiped his brow ; for, notwithstanding the coolness of the weather, he was heated with the vehemence of his speech and action. He then descended from the pulpit, and spoke a word or two to the corporal who commanded the party of soldiers, who, replying by a sober nod of intelligence, drew his men together and marched them in order to their quarters in the.

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slowly, and so deeply engaged in their own conversation that they did not raise their eyes to observe that there stood a stranger in the path before them. The soldier took advantage of their state of abstraction, and, desirous at once to watch their motions, and avoid their observation, he glided beneath one of the huge trees which skirted the path, and whose boughs, sweeping the ground on every side, ensured him against discovery, unless in case of an actual search.

In the meantime, the gentleman and lady continued to advance, directing their course to a rustic seat, which still enjoyed the sunbeams, and was placed adjacent to the tree where the stranger was concealed.

The man was elderly, yet seemed bent more by sorrow and infirmity than by the weight of years. He wore a mourning cloak, over a dress of the same melancholy colour, cut in that picturesque form which Vandyck has rendered immortal. But although the dress was handsome, it was put on and worn with a carelessness which showed the mind of the wearer ill at ease. His aged, yet still handsome countenance, had the same air of consequence which distinguished his dress and his gait. A striking part of his appearance was a long white beard, which descended far over the breast of his slashed doublet, and looked singular from its contrast in colour with his habit.

The young lady, by whom this venerable gentleman seemed to be in some degree supported as they walked arm in arm, was a slight and sylphlike form, with a person so delicately made, and so beautiful in countenance that it seemed the earth on which she walked too grossly massive a support for a creature so  
*But mortal beauty must share human sorrow  
eyes of the beautiful being showed tokens of tear  
colour was heightened as she listened to her aged  
panion ; and it was plain, from his melancholy*

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pleased look, that the conversation was as distressing to himself as to her. When they sat down on the bench we have mentioned, the gentleman's discourse could be distinctly overheard by the eavesdropping soldier, but the answers of the young lady reached his ear rather less distinctly.

"It is not to be endured!" said the old man, passionately; "it would stir a paralytic wretch to start up a soldier. My people have been thinned, I grant you, or have fallen off from me in these times—I owe them no grudge for it, poor knaves; what should they do waiting on me when the pantry has no bread and the buttery no ale? But we have still about us some rugged foresters of the old Woodstock breed—old as myself most of them—what of that? old wood seldom warps in the wetting;—I will hold out the old house, and it will not be the first time that I have held it against ten times the strength that we hear of now."

"Alas! my dear father!" said the young lady, in a tone which seemed to intimate his proposal of defence to be altogether desperate.

"And why alas?" said the gentleman, angrily; "is it because I shut my door against a score or two of these bloodthirsty hypocrites?"

"But their masters can as easily send a regiment or an army, if they will," replied the lady; "and what good would your present defence do, excepting to exasperate them to your utter destruction?"

"Be it so, Alice," replied her father; "I have lived my time, and beyond it. I have outlived the kindest and most princelike of masters. What do I do on the earth since the dismal thirtieth of January? The parricide of that day was a signal to all true servants of Charles Stuart to avenge his death, or die as soon after as they could find a worthy opportunity."

"Do not speak thus, sir," said Alice Lee; "it

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ie your gravity and your worth to throw away  
hich may yet be of service to your king and  
-it will not and cannot always be thus. England  
ng endure the rulers which these bad times  
ned her. In the meanwhile—[here a few words  
he listener's ears]—and beware of that impa-  
ich makes bad worse."

e?" exclaimed the impatient old man, "*What*  
rse? Is it not at the worst already? Will not  
le expel us from the only shelter we have left  
what remains of royal property under my  
ake the palace of princes into a den of thieves,  
wipe their mouths and thank God, as if they  
an alms-deed?"

said his daughter, "there is hope behind, and  
King is ere this out of their reach—We have  
think well of my brother Albert's safety."

Albert! there again," said the old man, in a  
proach; "had it not been for thy entreaties I  
to Worcester myself; but I must needs lie here  
thless hound when the hunt is up, when who  
at service I might have shown? An old  
d is sometimes useful when his arm is but littl  
ut you and Albert were so desirous that I  
alone—and now, who can say what has beco'

nay, father," said Alice, "we have good '  
t escaped from that fatal day; young /  
mile from the field."

g Abney lied, I believe," said the father  
our of contradiction—"Young Abney'  
sker than his hands, but far slower  
els when he leaves the roundhead  
ather Albert's dead body were  
nd Cromwell, than hear he fle  
ey."

## WOODSTOCK.

"My dearest father," said the young lady, weeping as she spoke, "what can I say to comfort you?"

"Comfort me, say'st thou, girl? I am sick of comfort—an honourable death, with the ruins of Woodstock for my monument, were the only comfort to old Henry Lee. Yes, by the memory of my fathers! I will make good the Lodge against these rebellious robbers."

"Yet be ruled, dearest father," said the maiden, "and submit to that which we cannot gainsay. My uncle Everard"—

Here the old man caught at her unfinished words. "Thy uncle Everard, wench!—Well, get on.—What of thy precious and loving uncle Everard?"

"Nothing, sir," she said, "if the subject displeases you."

"Displeases me?" he replied, "why should it displease me? or if it did, why shouldst thou, or any one, affect to care about it? What is it that hath happened of late years—what is it can be thought to happen that astrologer can guess at, which can give pleasure to us?"

"Fate," she replied, "may have in store the joyful restoration of our banished Prince."

"Too late for my time, Alice," said the knight; "if there be such a white page in the heavenly book, it will not be turned until long after my day.—But I see thou wouldst escape me.—In a word, what of thy uncle Everard?"

"Nay, sir," said Alice, "God knows I would rather be silent for ever, than speak what might, as you would take it, add to your present distemperature."

"Distemperature!" said her father; "Oh, thou art a sweet-lipped physician, and wouldst, I warrant me, drop nought but sweet balm, and honey, and oil, on my distemperature—if that is the phrase for an old man's ailment, when he is well-nigh heart-broken.—Once more what of thy uncle Everard?"

## WOODSTOCK.

His last words were uttered in a high and peevish tone of voice ; and Alice Lee answered her father in a trembling and submissive tone.

"I only meant to say, sir, that I am well assured that my uncle Everard, when we quit this place "——

"That is to say, when we are kicked out of it by crop-eared canting villains like himself.—But on with thy bountiful uncle—what will he do?—will he give us the remains of his worshipful and economical housekeeping, the fragments of a thrice-sacked capon twice a-week, and a plentiful fast on the other five days?—Will he give us beds beside his half-starved nags, and put them under a short allowance of straw, that his sister's husband—that I should have called my deceased angel by such a name !—and his sister's daughter, may not sleep on the stones? Or will he send us a noble each, with a warning to make it last, for he had never known the ready-penny so hard to come by? Or what else will your uncle Everard do for us? Get us a furlough to beg? Why, I can do that without him."

"You misconstrue him much," answered Alice, with more spirit than she had hitherto displayed ; "and would you but question your own heart, you would acknowledge—I speak with reverence—that your tongue utters what your better judgment would disown. My uncle Everard is neither a miser nor a hypocrite—neither fond of the goods of this world that he would supply our distresses amply, nor so wedded to fana opinions as to exclude charity for other sects & his own."

"Ay, ay, the Church of England is a *sect* wi' I doubt not, and perhaps with thee too, Alice,"  
*knight.* "What is a Muggletonian, or a Ran Brownist, but a sectary? and thy phrase pla all, with Jack Presbyter himself, on the sam with our learned prelates and religious clerg



is the cant of the  
thou not talk like  
singing sisters, sin-  
cavalier for a father,  
Everard?"

"If you speak t.  
"what can I answe  
word, and I shall ha  
commission."

"Oh, it is a commis  
much from the beginni  
touching the ambassa  
mediator, do your erra  
to complain of my patie

"Then, sir," replied I  
desires you would be c  
who come here to sequ  
perty; or, at least, heedf  
obstacle or opposition: it  
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nity, which he thinks may c  
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### WOODSTOCK.

the hour of affliction, and recommend to him to make his conscience truckle to his interest, and to beg back at the bloody hands of his master's, and perhaps his son's murderers, a wretched remnant of the royal property he has been robbed of!—Why, wench, if I must beg, think'st thou I will sue to those who have made me a mendicant? No. I will never show my grey beard, worn in sorrow for my sovereign's death, to move the compassion of some proud sequestrator, who perhaps was one of the parricides. No. If Henry Lee must sue for food, it shall be of some sound loyalist like himself, who, having but half a loaf remaining, will not nevertheless refuse to share it with him. For his daughter, she may wander her own way, which leads her to a refuge with her wealthy roundhead kinsfolk; but let her no more call him father, whose honest indigence she has refused to share!"

## WOODSTOCK.

office to that young man my duty to you? Know, if I were capable of such criminal weakness, Markham and Everard were the first to despise me for it."

She put her handkerchief to her eyes, but she could not hide her sobs, nor conceal the distress they intimated. The old man was moved.

"I cannot tell," he said, "what to think of it. Thou seem'st sincere, and wert ever a good and kindly daughter—how thou hast let that rebel youth creep into thy heart I wot not; perhaps it is a punishment on me, who thought the loyalty of my house was like undefiled ermine. Yet here is a damned spot, and on the fairest gem of all—my own dear Alice. But do not weep—we have enough to vex us. Where is it that Shakspeare hath it :—

——Gentle daughter,  
Give even way unto my rough affairs;  
Put you not on the temper of the times,  
Nor be, like them, to Percy troublesome."

"I am glad," answered the young lady, "to hear you quote your favourite again, sir. Our little jars are ever well-nigh ended when Shakspeare comes in play."

"His book was the closet companion of my blessed master," said Sir Henry Lee; "after the Bible (with reverence for naming them together) he felt more comfort in it than in any other; and as I have shared his disease, why, it is natural I should take his medicine. Albeit, I pretend not to my master's art in explaining the dark passages; for I am but a rude man, and rustically brought up to arms and hunting."

"You have seen Shakspeare yourself, sir?" said the young lady.

"Silly wench," replied the knight, "he died when I was a mere child—thou hast heard me say so twenty times; but thou wouldst lead the old man away from the tender subject. Well, though I am not blind, I can



## WOODSTOCK.

"True, sir," said Alice, "and it may not be useless to recollect, that any stirring of the royalists at this unpropitious moment will make them deal yet more harshly with the University, which they consider as being at the bottom of every thing which moves for the King in these parts."

"It is true, wench," replied the knight; "and small cause would make the villains sequestrate the poor remains which the civil wars have left to the colleges. That, and the risk of my poor fellows—Well! thou hast disarmed me, girl. I will be as patient and calm as a martyr."

"Pray God you keep your word, sir!" replied his daughter; "but you are ever so much moved at the sight of any of these men, that"—

"Would you make a child of me, Alice?" said Sir Henry. "Why, know you not that I can look upon a viper, or a toad, or a bunch of engendering adders, without any worse feeling than a little disgust? and though a roundhead, and especially a red-coat, are in my opinion more poisonous than vipers, more loathsome than toads, more hateful than knotted adders, yet can I overcome my nature so far, that should one of them appear at this moment, thyself should see how civilly I would entreat him."

As he spoke, the military preacher abandoned his leafy screen, and stalking forward, stood unexpectedly before the old cavalier, who stared at him, as if he had thought his expressions had actually raised the devil.

"Who art thou?" at length said Sir Henry, in a raised and angry voice, while his daughter clung to his arm in terror, little confident that her father's pacific resolutions would abide the shock of this unwelcome apparition.

"I am one," replied the soldier, "who neith

### WOODSTOCK.

nor shame to call myself a poor day-labourer in the great work of England—umph!—Ay, a simple and sincere upholder of the good old cause."

"And what the devil do you seek here?" said the old knight, fiercely.

"The welcome due to the steward of the Lords Commissioners," answered the soldier.

"Welcome art thou as salt would be to sore eyes," said the cavalier; "but who be your Commissioners, man?"

The soldier with little courtesy held out a scroll, which Sir Henry took from him betwixt his finger and

## WOODSTOCK.

ill, but it consists not with my duty to hear these odly men, in whose service I am, spoken of after this irreverent and unbecoming fashion. And albeit I know that you malignants think you have a right to make free with that damnation, which you seem to use as your own portion, yet it is superfluous to invoke it against others, who have better hopes in their thoughts, and better words in their mouths."

"Thou art but a canting varlet," replied the knight; "and yet thou art right in some sense—for it is superfluous to curse men who already are damned as black as the smoke of hell itself."

"I prithee forbear," continued the soldier, "for manners' sake, if not for conscience—grisly oaths suit ill with grey beards."

"Nay, that is truth, if the devil spoke it," said the knight; "and I thank Heaven I can follow good counsel, though old Nick gives it. And so, friend, touching these same Commissioners, bear them this message; that Sir Henry Lee is Keeper of Woodstock Park, with right of waif and stray, vert and venison, as complete as any of them have to their estate—that is, if they possess any estate but what they have gained by plundering honest men. Nevertheless, he will give place to those who have made their might their right, and will not expose the lives of good and true men, where the odds are so much against them. And he protests that he makes this surrender, neither as acknowledging of these so termed Commissioners, nor as for his own individual part fearing their force, but purely to avoid the loss of English blood, of which so much hath been spilt in these late times."

"It is well spoken," said the steward of the Commissioners; "and therefore, I pray you, let us wa together into the house, that thou may'st deliver unto me the vessels, and gold and silver ornaments."

Lord hath decided this great controversy in favour of us and ours, against thee and thine? Wherefore, render up thy stewardship peacefully, and deliver up to me the chattels of the Man, Charles Stuart."

"Patience is a good nag, but she will bolt," said the knight, unable longer to rein in his wrath. He plucked his sheathed rapier from his side, struck the soldier a severe blow with it, and instantly drawing it, and throwing the scabbard over the trees, placed himself in a posture of defence, with his sword's point within half-a-yard of the steward's body. The latter stepped back with activity, threw his long cloak from his shoulders, drawing his long tuck, stood upon his guard. Swords clashed smartly together, while Alice, terror, screamed wildly for assistance. But the *was of short duration.* The old cavalier had a *man as cunning of fence as he himself, or a I* *so, and possessing all the strength and activity* *time had deprived Sir Henry, and the calm* *the other had lost in his passion.* They had

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upon the head of the steward, had not Sir Henry inter-  
posed.

"We must trail bats now, Joceline—our time of  
shouldering them is past. It skills not striving against

his bristles, and wagged his tail.

Sir Henry, who had great respect for the sagacity of his favourite, said in a low voice to Alice, "Bevis is of thy opinion, and counsels submission. There is the finger of Heaven in this to punish the pride, ever the fault of our house.—Friend," he continued, addressing the soldier, "thou hast given the finishing touch to lesson, which ten years of constant misfortune have been unable fully to teach me. Thou hast distinctly shown me the folly of thinking that a good cause can strengthen a weak arm. God forgive me for the thought, could almost turn infidel, and believe that His blessing goes ever with the longest sword ; but it will be always thus. God knows his time.—Reac

*Toledo, Joceline, yonder it lies ; and the scabbard where it hangs on the tree.—Do not pull at Alice, and look so miserably frightened ; I shall hurry to betake me to bright steel again, I promise.*

should nothing, just

I will never cross the threshold again.

It for a night? I would trouble no one in Wood  
—hum—ay—it shall be so. Alice and I, Joceline  
go down to thy hut by Rosamond's well; we will  
own the shelter of thy roof for one night at least  
I wilt give us welcome, wilt thou not?—How now-  
clouded brow?"

Joceline certainly looked embarrassed, directed first  
once to Alice, then looked to heaven, then to earth  
at last to the four quarters of the horizon, and then  
murmured out, "Certainly—without question—might  
it run down to put the house in order."

"Order enough—order enough—for those that  
can be glad of clean straw in a barn," said the knight  
but if thou hast an ill-will to harbour any obnoxious  
malignant persons, as the phrase goes, never shalt  
speak it out, man. 'Tis true, I took thee up when

that a ragged Robin, made a keeper of thee, as

Sailors think no longer of

### WOODSTOCK.

"Not a whit necessary," said the knight, while Alice had much trouble in concealing her agitation. "If thy matters are unseemly, they are fitter for a defeated knight—if they are unshapely, why, the liker to the rest of a world, which is all unshaped. Go thou with that man.—What is thy name, friend?"

"Joseph Tomkins is my name in the flesh," said the steward. "Men call me Honest Joe, and trusty Tomkins."

"If thou hast deserved such names, considering what trade thou hast driven, thou art a jewel indeed," said the knight; "yet if thou hast not, never blush for the matter, Joseph, for if thou art not in truth honest, thou hast all the better chance to keep the fame of it—the title and the thing itself have long walked separate ways."

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### WOODSTOCK.

whether they stood on hostile or on friendly terms together, and were at a loss how to open a conversation. They heard the knight's whistle summon Bevis; but though the good hound turned his head and pricked his ears at the sound, yet he did not obey the call, but continued to snuff around Joseph Tomkins's cloak.

"Thou art a rare one, I fear me," said the keeper, looking to his new acquaintance. "I have heard of men who have charms to steal both dogs and deer."

"Trouble not thyself about my qualities, friend," said Joseph Tomkins, "but bethink thee of doing thy master's bidding."

Joceline did not immediately answer, but at length, as if in sign of truce, stuck the end of his quarterstaff upright in the ground, and leant upon it as he said gruffly,—“So, my tough old knight and you were at drawn bilbo, by way of afternoon service, sir preacher—Well for you I came not up till the blades were done jingling, or I had rung even-song upon your pate.”

The Independent stilled grimly, as he replied, “Nay, friend, it is well for thyself, for never should sexton have been better paid for the knell he tolled. Nevertheless, why should there be war betwixt us, or my hand be against thine? Thou art but a poor knave, doing thy master's order, nor have I any desire that my own blood or thine should be shed touching this matter.—Thou art, I understand, to give me peaceful possession of the Palace of Woodstock, so called—though there is now no palace in England, no, nor shall be in the days that come after, until we shall enter the palace of the New Jerusalem, and the reign of the Saints shall commence on earth.”

“Pretty well begun already, friend Tomkins,” said the keeper; “you are little short of being kings already upon the matter as it now stands; and for your ~~share~~ <sup>share</sup> I wot not, but Woodstock is as pretty a new ~~to~~ <sup>to</sup>”

## WOODSTOCK.

to begin with.—Well, will you shog—will you on—will you take sasine and livery?—You heard my orders."

"Umph—I know not," said Tompkins. "I must beware of ambuscades, and I am alone here. Moreover, it is the High Thanksgiving appointed by Parliament; and owned to by the army—also the old man and the young woman may want to recover some of their clothes and personal property, and I would not that they were baulked on my account. Wherefore, if thou wilt deliver me possession to-morrow morning, it shall be done in personal presence of my own followers, and of the Presbyterian man the Mayor, so that the transfer may be made before witnesses; whereas, were there none with us but thou to deliver, and I to take possession, the men of Belial might say, Go to, Trusty Tomkins hath been an Edomite—Honest Joe hath been as an Ishmaelite, rising up early and dividing the spoil with them that served the Man—yea, they that wore beards and green jerkins, as in remembrance of the Man and of his government."

Joceline fixed his keen dark eyes upon the soldier as he spoke, as if in design to discover whether there was fair play in his mind or not. He then applied his five fingers to scratch a large shock head of hair, as if that operation was necessary to enable him to come to a conclusion. "This is all fair sounding, brother," he; "but I tell you plainly, there are some silver r and platters, and flagons, and so forth, in yonder which have survived the general sweep that sent plate to the smelting-pot, to put our knight's horseback. Now, if thou takest not these off I may come to trouble, since it may be thou minished their numbers.—Whereas, I being fellow"—

"As ever stole venison," said Tomkins, *owe thee an interruption.*"

"Go to, then," replied the keeper;

## WOODSTOCK.

~~I~~ have come to mischance in my walk, it was no way in the course of dishonesty, but merely to keep my old dame's pan from rusting ; but for silver porringers, tankards, and such like, I would as soon have drunk the melted silver, as stolen the vessel made out of it. So that I would not wish blame or suspicion fell on me in this matter. And, therefore, if you will have the things rendered even now,—why so—and if not, hold me blameless."

"Ay, truly?" said Tomkins ; "and who is to hold me blameless, if they should see cause to think anything minished ? Not the right worshipful Commissioners, to whom the property of the estate is as their own ; therefore, as thou say'st, we must walk warily in the matter. To lock up the house and leave it, were but the work of simple ones. What say'st thou to spend the night there, and then nothing can be touched without the knowledge of us both ?"

"Why, concerning that," answered the keeper, "I should be at my hut to make matters somewhat conformable for the old knight and Mistress Alice, for my old dame Joan is something dunny, and will scarce know how to manage—and yet, to speak the truth, by the mass I would rather not see Sir Henry to-night, since what has happened to-day hath roused his spleen, and it is a peradventure he may have met something at the hut which will scarce tend to cool it."

"It is a pity," said Tomkins, "that, being a gentleman of such grave and goodly presence, he should be such a malignant cavalier, and that he should, like the rest of that generation of vipers, have clothed himself with curses as with a garment."

"Which is as much as to say, the tough old knight hath a habit of swearing," said the keeper, grinning a pun, which has been repeated since his time ; "but can help it ? it comes of use and wont. Were you

## WOODSTOCK.

in your bodily self, to light suddenly on a Maypole, with all the blithe morris-dancers prancing around it to the merry pipe and tabor, with bells jingling, ribands fluttering, lads frisking and laughing, lasses leaping till you might see where the scarlet garter fastened the light blue hose, I think some feeling, resembling either natural sociality, or old use and wont, would get the better, friend, even of thy gravity, and thou wouldst fling thy cuckoldy steeple-hat one way, and that bloodthirsty long sword another, and trip like the noodles of Hogs-Norton, when the pigs play on the organ."


The Independent turned fiercely round on the keeper, and replied, "How now, Mr. Green Jerkin? what language is this to one whose hand is at the plough? I advise thee to put curb on thy tongue, lest thy ribs pay the forfeit."

"Nay, do not take the high tone with me, brother," answered Joceline; "remember thou hast not the old knight of sixty-five to deal with, but a fellow as bitter and prompt as thyself—it may be a little more so—younger, at all events—and prithee, why shouldst thou take such umbrage at a Maypole? I would thou hadst known one Phil Hazeldine of these parts—He was the best morris-dancer betwixt Oxford and Burford."

"The more shame to him," answered the Independent "and I trust he has seen the error of his ways, and mended himself (as, if a man of action, he easily might) fit better company than wood-hunters, deer-stealers, Marions, swash-bucklers, deboshed revellers, brawlers, maskers, and mummers, lewd men women, fools and fiddlers, and carnal self every description."

"replied the keeper, "you are  
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## WOODSTOCK.

you, Mr. Longsword, have put down, I have seen this greensward alive with merry maidens and manly fellows. The good old rector himself thought it was no sin to come for a while and look on, and his goodly cassock and scarf kept us all in good order, and taught us to limit our mirth within the bounds of discretion. We might, it may be, crack a broad jest, or pledge a friendly cup a turn too often, but it was in mirth and good neighbourhood—Ay, and if there was a bout at single-stick, or a bellyful of boxing, it was all for love and kindness ; and better a few dry blows in drink, than the bloody doings we have had in sober earnest, since the presbyter's cap got above the bishop's mitre, and we exchanged our goodly rectors and learned doctors, whose sermons were all bolstered up with as much Greek and Latin as might have confounded the devil himself, for weavers and cobblers, and such other pulpit volunteers, as—we heard this morning—It will out."

"Well, friend," said the Independent, with patience scarcely to have been expected, "I quarrel not with thee for nauseating my doctrine. If thine ear is so much tickled with tabor tunes and morris tripping, truly it is not likely thou shouldst find pleasant savour in more wholesome and sober food. But let us to the Lodge, that we may go about our business there before the sun sets."

"Troth, and that may be advisable for more reasons than one," said the keeper ; "for there have been tales about the Lodge which have made men afeard to harbour there after nightfall."

"Were not yon old knight, and yonder damsel daughter, wont to dwell there?" said the Independent

*"My information said so."*

*"Ay, truly did they," said Joceline ; "and we kept a jolly household all went well enough ; for wishes fear like good ale. But after the be*

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~~we~~ went to the wars, and were slain at Naseby fight, ~~my~~ who were left found the Lodge more lonesome, and ~~he~~ old knight has been much deserted of his servants:—marry, it might be, that he has lacked silver of late to pay groom and lackey."

"A potential reason for the diminution of a household," said the soldier.

"Right, sir, even so," replied the keeper. "They spoke of steps in the great gallery, heard by dead of the night, and voices that whispered at noon in the matted chambers; and the servants pretended that these things scared them away; but, in my poor judgment, when Martinmas and Whitsuntide came round without a penny-fee, the old blue-bottles of serving-men began to think of creeping elsewhere before the frost chilled them.—No devil so frightful as that which dances in the pocket where there is no cross to keep him out."

"You were reduced, then, to a petty household?" said the Independent.

"Ay, marry were we," said Joceline; "but we kept some half-score together, what with blue-bottles in the Lodge, what with green caterpillars of the chase, like him who is yours to command; we stuck together till we found a call to take a morning's ride somewhere or other."

"To the town of Worcester," said the soldier, "where you were crushed like vermin and palmer worms, as you are."

"You may say your pleasure," replied the keeper; "I'll never contradict a man who has got my head under his belt. Our backs are at the wall, or you would not be here."

"Nay, friend," said the Independent, "thou riskest *nothing* by thy freedom and trust in me. I can be bon *camarado* to a good soldier, although I have striven with him even to the going down of the sun.—But here we are in front of the Lodge."

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They stood accordingly in front of the old building, irregularly constructed, and at different times, the humour of the English monarchs led them to the pleasures of Woodstock Chase, and to various improvements for their own accommodation, and the singular luxury of each age required. The old structure had been named by tradition *Henry's Tower* ; it was a small turret of green stone, with narrow windows, and walls of massive masonry. The Tower had no opening to the ground, or to the sky, ending, a great part of the lower portion being in ruin-work. It was traditionally said to have been reached only by a sort of small drawbridge, which was raised or lowered at pleasure from a little portal near the base of the turret, to the battlements of another tower of the same construction, but twenty feet lower, and containing only a winding staircase, called in old times *Henry's Ladder* ; because it is said, that by ascending this staircase to the top of the tower, and then descending by the drawbridge, Henry obtained access to the chamber of his paramour.

This tradition had been keenly impugned by *John de Necliffe*, the former rector of Woodstock, who declared that what was called *Rosamond's Tower*

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of different ages : comprising a sort of dark forest surrounded by buildings which corresponded well with other, sometimes well-known structures, in reaching the centre and frequently in such ways. The different heights of the buildings indicated that they could only be connected by the usual means of ascent, which exercised the limbs of our ancestors in the narrow and earlier centuries, and even sometimes to have been contrived for no other purpose.

The varied and multiplied fronts of this irregular building were, as Dr. Rochecliffe was wont to say, an absolute banquet to the architectural antiquary, as they certainly contained specimens of every style which existed, from the pure Norman of Henry of Angou, down to the composite, half Gothic half classical architecture of Elizabeth and her successor. Accordingly, the rector was himself as much enamoured of Woodstock as ever was Henry of Fair Rosamond ; and as his intimacy with Sir Henry Lee permitted him entrance at all times to the Royal Lodge, he used to spend whole days in wandering about the antique apartments, examining, measuring, studying, and finding out excellent reasons for architectural peculiarities, which probably only owed their existence to the freakish fancy of a Gothic artist. But the old antiquary had been expelled from his living by the intolerance and troubles of the times, and his successor, Nehemiah Hold enough, would have considered an elaborate investigation of the profane sculpture and architecture of blinded and bloodthirsty papists, together with the history of the dissolute amours of old Norman monarchs, as little better than a bowing down before the calves of Bethel, and a drinking of the cup of abominations. We return to the course of our story.

"There is," said the Independent Tomkins, after he had carefully perused the front of the building, "now rare monument of olden wickedness about this place

It must be owned, too, that there was something about the Independent so dark and mysterious, so grim and grave, that the more open spirit of the keeper felt oppressed, and, if not overawed, at least kept in doubt concerning him ; and he thought it wisest, as well as safest, for his master and himself, to avoid all subjects of dispute, and know better with whom he was dealing, before he made either friend or enemy of him.

The great gate of the Lodge was strongly bolted -- the wicket opened on Joceline's raising the latch. ' was a short passage of ten feet, which had been closed by a portcullis at the inner end, while the holes opened on either side, through which an intruder might be annoyed, who, having surmounted the first gate, must be thus exposed to a severe punishment he could force the second. But the machine portcullis was damaged, and it now remained brandishing its jaw, well furnished with teeth, incapable of dropping it across the path. The way, therefore, lay open to the great vestibule of the Lodge. One end of the

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partment was entirely occupied by a gallery, which had ancient times served to accommodate the musicians and minstrels. There was a clumsy staircase at either side of it, composed of entire logs of a foot square ; and in each angle of the ascent was placed, by way of sentinel, the figure of a Norman foot-soldier, having an open casque on his head, which displayed features as stern as the painter's genius could devise. Their arms were buff-jackets, or shirts of mail, round bucklers, with spikes in the centre, and buskins which adorned and defended the feet and ankles, but left the knees bare. These wooden warders held great swords or maces in their hands, like military guards on duty. Many an empty hook and brace, along the walls of the gloomy apartment, marked the spots from which arms, long preserved as trophies, had been, in the pressure of the wars, once more taken down, to do service in the field, like veterans whom extremity of danger recalls to battle. On other rusty fastenings were still displayed the hunting trophies of the monarchs to whom the Lodge belonged, and of the silvan knights to whose care it had been from time to time confided.

At the nether end of the hall, a huge, heavy, stone-wrought chimney-piece projected itself ten feet from the wall, adorned with many a cipher, and many a scutcheon of the Royal House of England. In its present state, it yawned like the arched mouth of a funeral vault, or perhaps might be compared to the crater of an extinguished volcano. But the sable complexion of the massive stone-work, and all around it, showed that the time had been when it sent its huge fires blazing up the huge chimney, besides puffing many a volume of smoke over the heads of the jovial guests, whose royalty or nobility did not render them sensitive enough to quarrel with such a slight inconvenience. On these occasions it was the tradition of the house, that two cart-loads of wood

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was the regular allowance for the fire between noon and curfew, and the andirons, or dogs, as they were termed, constructed for retaining the blazing firewood on the hearth, were wrought in the shape of lions of such gigantic size as might well warrant the legend. There were long seats of stone within the chimney, where, in despite of the tremendous heat, monarchs were sometimes said to have taken their station, and amused themselves with broiling the *umbles*, or *dowsets*, of the deer, upon the glowing embers, with their own royal hands, when happy the courtier who was invited to taste the royal cookery. Tradition was here also ready with her record, to show what merry jibes, such as might be exchanged between prince and peer, had flown about at the jolly banquet which followed the Michaelmas hunt. She could tell, too, exactly, where King Stephen sat when he darned his own princely hose, and knew most of the tricks he had put upon little Winkin, the tailor of Woodstock.



**Desert, and thou shalt be a waste place—yea, and a wilderness—yea, a desert of salt, in which there shall be pest and famine."**

"There is like to be enough of both to-night," said Joceline, "unless the good knight's larder be somewhat fuller than it is wont."

"We must care for the creature comforts," said the Independent, "but in due season, when our duties are done. Whither lead these entrances?"

"That to the right," replied the keeper, "leads to what are called the state-apartments, not used since the year sixteen hundred and thirty-nine, when his blessed Majesty"——

"How, sir!" interrupted the Independent in a voice of thunder, "dost thou speak of Charles Stuart as blessing, or blessed?—beware the proclamation to that effect."

"I meant no harm," answered the keeper, suppressing his disposition to make a harsher reply. "My business is with bolts and bucks, not with titles and state affairs. But yet, whatever may have happened since, that poor King was followed with blessings enough from Woodstock, for he left a glove full of broad pieces for the poor of the place"——

"Peace, friend," said the Independent; "I will think thee else one of those besotted and blinded papists, who hold, that bestowing of alms is an atonement and washing away of the wrongs and oppressions which have been wrought by the almsgiver. Thou sayest, then, these were the apartments of Charles Stuart?"

"And of his father, James, before him, and Elizabeth, before *him*, and bluff King Henry, who builded that wing, before them all."

"And there, I suppose, the knight and his daughter dwelt?"

"No," replied Joceline; "Sir Henry Lee had to

cared knave like thee."

He acted as the usher, however, and led on towards the ranger's apartments.

This suite opened by a short passage from the hall, secured at time of need by two oaken doors, which could be fastened by large bars of the same, that were drawn out of the wall, and entered into square holes contrived for their reception on the other side of portal. At the end of this passage, a small anteroom received them, into which opened the sitting apartment of the good knight—which, in the style of the might have been termed a fair summer parlour—by two oriel windows, so placed as to command them a separate avenue, leading distant and  
*the forest. The principal ornament of the :  
besides two or three family portraits of less in  
a tall full-length picture, that hung above th*

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face, which, like that in the hall, was of heavy stone-work, ornamented with carved scutcheons, emblazoned with various devices. The portrait was that of a man about fifty years of age, in complete plate armour, and painted in the harsh and dry manner of Holbein—probably, indeed, the work of that artist, as the dates corresponded. The formal and marked angles, points, and projections of the armour, were a good subject for the harsh pencil of that early school. The face of the knight was, from the fading of the colours, pale and dim, like that of some being from the other world, yet the lines expressed forcibly pride and exultation.

He pointed with his leading-staff, or truncheon, to the back-ground, where, in such perspective as the artist possessed, were depicted the remains of a burning church, or monastery, and four or five soldiers, in red cassocks, bearing away in triumph what seemed a brazen font or laver. Above their heads might be traced in scroll, "*Lee Victor sic voluit.*" Right opposite to the picture, hung, in a niche in the wall, a complete set of tilting armour, the black and gold colours and ornaments of which exactly corresponded with those exhibited in the portrait.

The picture was one of those which, from something marked in the features and expression, attract the observation even of those who are ignorant of art. The Independent looked at it until a smile passed transiently over his clouded brow. Whether he smiled to see the grim old cavalier employed in desecrating a religious house—(an occupation much conforming to the practice of his own sect)—whether he smiled in contempt of the old painter's harsh and dry mode of working—or whether the sight of this remarkable portrait revived some other ideas, the under-keeper could not decide.

The smile passed away in an instant, as the soldier looked to the oriel windows. The recesses within them were raised a step or two from the wall. In one was

E.



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He darted another glance at Tomkins, who still seemed busy with the book before him, then sidled close to the astonished girl, who had continued looking alternately at the keeper and at the stranger, as if she had been unable to understand the words of the first, or to comprehend the meaning of the second being present."

"Go," whispered Joliffe, approaching his mouth so near her cheek, that his breath waved the curls of her hair; "go, my dearest Phœbe, trip it as fast as a fawn down to my lodge—I will soon be there, and"—

"Your lodge, indeed!" said Phœbe; "you are very bold, for a poor killbuck that never frightened anything before save a dun deer—*Your* lodge, indeed!—I am like to go there, I think."

"Hush, hush! Phœbe—here is no time for jesting. Down to my hut, I say, like a deer, for the knight and Mrs. Alice are both there, and I fear will not return hither again.—All's naught, girl—and our evil days are come at last with a vengeance—we are fairly at bay and fairly hunted down."

"Can this be, Joceline?" said the poor girl, turning to the keeper, with an expression of fright in her countenance, which she had hitherto averted in rural coquetry.

"As sure, my dearest Phœbe, as"—

The rest of the asseveration was lost in Phœbe's ear, so closely did the keeper's lips approach it; and if they approached so very near as to touch her cheek, grief, like impatience, hath its privileges, and poor Phœbe had enough of serious alarm to prevent her from demurring upon such a trifle.

But no trifle was the approach of Joceline's lips to Phœbe's pretty though sunburnt cheek, in the estimation of the Independent, who, a little before the object of Joceline's vigilance, had been more lately in his turn observer of the keeper's demeanour, so soon as the

F.

side of a preacher and a reprover of vice,  
he exclaimed, "shameless and impudent  
that—chambering and wantoning in o  
!—How—would you play your pranks be  
of the Commissioners of the High Court  
as ye would in a booth at the fulsome  
the trappings and tracings of a profane  
where the scoundrel minstrels make their  
to squeak, 'Kiss and be kind, the  
—But here," he said, dealing a perilous  
volume—"Here is the King and high p  
ces and follies!—Here is he, whom men  
y call nature's miracle!—Here is he,  
those for their cabinet-keeper, and whom  
ir take for their bed-fellow!—Here is the  
of fine words, foppery and folly—Here!"  
her thump upon the volume—and oh!  
oxburghe, it was the first folio—beloved  
ne, it was Hemmings and Condel—it  
*incept*)—"On thee," he continued—'  
Shakspeare, I charge whate'er of s  
and immodest folly hath defiled the

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—but I wonder who is sponſible for what lads and lasses did before his day?"

"Scoff not," ſaid the ſoldier, "leſt I, being called thereto by the voice within me, do deal with thee as a ſcorner. Verily, I ſay, that ſince the devil fell from Heaven, he never lacked agents on earth; yet nowhere hath he met with a wizard having ſuch infinite power over men's ſouls as this peſtilent fellow Shakspeare. ſeeks a wife a foul example for adultery, here ſhe ſhall find it—Would a man know how to train his fellow to be a murderer, here ſhall he find tutoring—Would a lady marry a heathen negro, ſhe ſhall have chronicled example for it—Would any one ſcorn at his Maker, he ſhall be furniſhed with a jeſt in this book—Would he defy his brother in the fleſh, he ſhall be accommodated with a challenge—Would you be drunk, Shakspeare will cheer you with a cup—Would you plunge in ſensual pleaſures, he will ſoothe you to indulgence, as with the laſcivious ſounds of a lute. This, I ſay, this book is the well-head and ſource of all thoſe evils which have overrun the land like a torrent, making men ſcoffers, doubters, deniers, murderers, makebates, and lovers of the wine-pot, haunting unclean places, and ſitting long at the evening wine. Away with him, away with him, men of England! to Tophet with his wicked book, and to the Vale of Hinnom with his accuſed bones! Verily but that our march was haſty when we paſſed Stratford, in the year 1643, with Sir William Waller; but that our march was haſty"—

"Because Prince Rupert was after you with his cavaliers," muttered the incorrigible Joceline.

"I ſay," continued the zealous trooper, raiſing his voice and extending his arm—"but that our march was by command haſty, and that we turned not aſide to our riding, cloſing our ranks each one upon the other as comes men of war, I had torn on that day the bones that preceptor of vice and debauchery from the

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and given them to the next dunghill. I would have made his memory a scoff and a hissing !”

“That is the bitterest thing he has said yet,” observed the keeper: “Poor Will would have liked the hissing worse than all the rest.”

“Will the gentleman say any more?” inquired Phoebe in a whisper. “Lack-a-day, he talks brave words, if one knew but what they meant. But it is a mercy our good knight did not see him ruffle the book at that rate—Mercy on us, there would certainly have been bloodshed.—But oh, the father—see how he is twisting his face about !—Is he ill of the colic, think’st thou, Joceline? Or, may I offer him a glass of strong waters?”

“Hark thee hither, wench !” said the keeper, “he is but loading his blunderbuss for another volley ; and while he turns up his eyes, and twists about his face, and clenches his fist, and shuffles and tramples with his feet in that fashion, he is bound to take no notice of anything. I would be sworn to cut his purse, if he had one, from his side, without his feeling it.”

“La ! Joceline,” said Phoebe, “and if he abides here in this turn of times, I dare say the gentleman will be easily served.”

“Care not thou about that,” said Joliffe ; “but tell me softly and hastily what is in the pantry?”

“Small housekeeping enough,” said Phoebe ; “a cold capon and some comfits, and the great standing venison pasty, with plenty of spice—a manchet or two besides, and that is all.”

“Well, it will serve for a pinch—wrap thy cloak round thy comely body—get a basket and a brace of trenchers and towels, they are heinously impoverished down yonder—carry down the capon and the manchets—the past must abide with this same soldier and me, and the pie crust will serve us for bread.”

“Rarely,” said Phoebe ; “I made the paste m



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Alf—it is as thick as the walls of Fair Rosamond's tower."

"Which two pairs of jaws would be long in gnawing through, work hard as they might," said the keeper. "But what liquor is there?"

"Only a bottle of Alicant, and one of sack, with the stone jug of strong waters," answered Phœbe.

"Put the wine-flasks into thy basket," said Joceline, "the knight must not lack his evening draught—and down with thee to the hut like a lapwing. There is enough for supper, and to-morrow is a new day.—Ha! by heaven I thought yonder man's eye watched us—No—he only rolled it round him in a brown study—Deep enough doubtless, as they all are.—But d—n him, he must be bottomless if I cannot sound him before the night's out.—Hie thee away, Phœbe."

But Phœbe was a rural coquette, and, aware that Joceline's situation gave him no advantage of avenging the challenge in a fitting way, she whispered in his ear, "Do you think our knight's friend, Shakspeare, really found out all these naughty devices the gentleman spoke of?"

Off she darted while she spoke, while Joliffe menaced future vengeance with his finger, as he muttered, "Go thy way, Phœbe Mayflower, the lightest-footed and lightest-hearted wench that ever tripped the sod in Woodstock Park!—After her, Bevis, and bring her safe to our master at the hut."

The large greyhound arose like a human servitor, who had received an order, and followed Phœbe through the hall, first licking her hand to make her sensible of his presence, and then putting himself to a slow trot, so as best to accommodate himself to the light pace of her whom he convoyed, whom Joceline had not extolled her activity without due reason. While Phœbe and guardian thread the forest glades, we return to the

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The Independent now seemed to start as if from a reverie. "Is the young woman gone?" said he.

"Ay, marry is she," said the keeper; "and if your worship hath farther commands, you must rest contented with male attendance."

"Commands—umph—I think the damsel might have tarried for another exhortation," said the soldier—"truly, I profess my mind was much inclined toward her for her edification."

"Oh, sir," replied Joliffe, "she will be at church next Sunday, and if your military reverence is pleased again to hold forth amongst us, she will have use of the doctrine, with the rest. But young maidens of these parts hear no private homilies.—And what is now your pleasure? Will you look at the other rooms, and at the few plate articles which have been left?"

"Umph—no," said the Independent—"it wears late, and gets dark—thou hast the means of giving us beds, friend?"

"Better you never slept in," replied the keeper.

"And wood for a fire, and a light, and some small pittance of creature-comforts for refreshment of the outward man?" continued the soldier.

"Without doubt," replied the keeper, displaying a prudent anxiety to gratify this important personage.

In a few minutes a great standing candlestick was placed on an oaken table. The mighty venison was adorned with parsley, was placed on the board on a cloth napkin; the stone bottle of strong waters, with a bottle jack full of ale, formed comfortable appendages; and this meal sat down in social manner the soldier, carrying a great elbow-chair, and the keeper, at his invitation using the more lowly accommodation of a stool opposite side, of the table. Thus agreeably ending our history leaves them for the present.

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### CHAP. IV.

————— *Y'on path of greensward  
Winds round by sparry grot and gay pavilion;  
There is no flint to gall thy tender foot,  
There's ready shelter from each breeze or shower.  
But duty guides not that way—see her stand,  
With wand entwined with amaranth, near yon cliffs.  
Oft where she leads thy blood must mark thy footsteps,  
Oft where she leads thy head must bear the storm,  
And thy shrunk form endure heat, cold, and hunger;  
But she will guide thee up to noble heights,  
Which he who gains seems native of the sky,  
While earthly things lie stretch'd beneath his feet,  
Diminish'd, shrunk, and valueless—*ANONYMOUS.

**T**HE reader cannot have forgotten that after his scuffle with the Commonwealth soldier, Sir Henry Lee, with his daughter Alice, had departed to take refuge in the hut of the stout keeper Joceline Joliffe. They walked slow, as before, for the old knight was at once oppressed by perceiving these last vestiges of royalty fall into the hands of republicans, and by the recollection of his recent defeat. At times he paused, and with his arms folded on his bosom, recalled all the circumstances attending his expulsion from a house so long his home. It seemed to him that, like the champions of romance of whom he had sometimes read, he himself was retiring from the post which it was his duty to guard, defeated by a Paynim knight, for whom the adventure had been reserved by fate. Alice had her own painful subjects of recollection, nor had the tenor of her last conversation with her father been so pleasant as to make her anxious to renew it until his temper should be more composed; for with an excellent disposition, and much love to his daughter, age and misfortunes, which of late came thicker and thic-

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had given to the good knight's passions a wayward irritability unknown to his better days. His daughter, and one or two attached servants, who still followed his decayed fortunes, soothed his frailty as much as possible, and pitied him even while they suffered under its effects.

It was a long time ere he spoke, and then he referred to an incident already noticed. "It is strange," he said, "that Bevis should have followed Joceline and that fellow rather than me."

"Assure yourself, sir," replied Alice, "that his sagacity saw in this man a stranger whom he thought himself obliged to watch circumspectly, and therefore he remained with Joceline."

"Not so, Alice," answered Sir Henry; "he leaves me because my fortunes have fled from me. There is a feeling in nature, affecting even the instinct, as it is called, of dumb animals, which teaches them to fly from misfortune. The very deer there will butt a sick or wounded buck from the herd; hurt a dog, and the whole kennel will fall on him and worry him; fishes devour their own kind when they are wounded with a spear; cut a crow's wing, or break its leg, the others will buffet it to death."

"That may be true of the more irrational kinds of animals among each other," said Alice, "for their whole life is well-nigh a warfare; but the dog leaves his own race to attach himself to ours; forsakes, for his master's company, food, and pleasure of his own kind; surely the fidelity of such a devoted and voluntary servant as Bevis hath been in particular, ought to be lightly suspected."

"I am not angry with the dog, Alice; I am sorry," replied her father. "I have read in chronicles that when Richard II. and Henry of Monmouth were at Berkeley Castle, a dog of the same

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ated the King, whom he had always attended upon, and attached himself to Henry, whom he then saw for the first time. Richard forebode, from the desertion of his favourite, his approaching deposition. The dog was afterwards kept at Woodstock, and Peris is said to be of his breed, which was heedfully kept up. What I might foretell of mischief from his desertion, I cannot guess, but my mind assures me it bodes no good."

There was a distant rustling among the withered leaves, a bounding or galloping sound on the path, and the favourite dog instantly joined his master.

"Come into court, old knave," said Alice, cheerfully, "and defend thy character, which is well-nigh endangered by this absence." But the dog only paid her courtesy by gamboling around them, and instantly plunged back again as fast as he could scamper.

"How now, knave?" said the knight; "thou art too well trained, surely, to take up the chase without orders." A minute more showed them Phoebe Mayflower approaching, her light pace so little impeded by the burden which she bore, that she joined her master and young mistress just as they arrived at the keeper's hut, which was the boundary of their journey. Peris, who had shot ahead to pay his compliments to Sir Henry, his master, had returned again to his immediate duty, the escorting Phoebe and her cargo of provisions. The whole party stood presently assembled before the door of the keeper's hut.

In better times a substantial stone habitation, fit for the yeoman-keeper of a royal walk, had adorned this place. A fair spring gushed out near the spot, and upon traversed yards and courts, attached to well-built and convenient kennels and mews. But in some of the skirmishes which were common during the civil wars this little sylvan dwelling had been attacked and defended, stormed and burnt. A neighbouring noble

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the Parliament side of the question, took advantage of Sir Henry Lee's absence, who was then in Charles's camp, and of the decay of the royal cause, and had, without scruple, carried off the hewn stones, and such building materials as the fire left unconsumed, and repaired his own manor-house with them. The yeoman-keeper, therefore, our friend Joceline, had constructed, for his own accommodation, and that of the old woman he called his dame, a wattled hut, such as his own labour, with that of a neighbour or two, had erected in the course of a few days. The walls were plastered with clay, white-washed, and covered with vines and other creeping plants; the roof was neatly thatched, and the whole, though merely a hut, had, by the neat-handed Joliffe, been so arranged as not to disgrace the condition of the dweller.

The knight advanced to the entrance; but the ingenuity of the architect, for want of a better lock to the door, which itself was but of wattles curiously twisted, had contrived a mode of securing the latch on the inside with a pin, which prevented it from rising; and in this manner it was at present fastened. Conceiving that this was some precaution of Joliffe's old housekeeper, of whose deafness they were all aware, Sir Henry raised his voice to demand admittance, but in vain. Irritated at this delay, he pressed the door at once with foot and hand in a way which the frail barrier was unable to resist; it gave way accordingly, and the knight thus forcibly entered the kitchen, or outward apartment, of his servant. In the midst of the floor, and with a posture which indicated embarrassment, stood a youthful stranger in a riding-suit.

"This may be my last act of authority here," said the knight, seizing the stranger by the collar, "but I will Ranger of Woodstock for this night at least—What art thou?"

~~The~~ stranger dropped the riding-mantle in which face was muffled, and at the same time fell on one ~~oe.~~

"Your poor kinsman, Markham Everard," he said, 'who came hither for your sake, although he fears you will scarce make him welcome for his own."

Sir Henry started back, but recovered himself in an instant, as one who recollected that he had a part of dignity to perform. He stood erect, therefore, and replied, with considerable assumption of stately ceremony :

"Fair kinsman, it pleases me that you are come to Woodstock upon the very first night that, for many years which have passed, is likely to promise you a worthy or a welcome reception."

"Now God grant it be so, that I rightly hear and duly understand you," said the young man; while Alice, though she was silent, kept her looks fixed on her father's face, as if desirous to know whether his meaning was kind towards his nephew, which her knowledge of his character inclined her greatly to doubt.

The knight meanwhile darted a sardonic look, first on his nephew, then on his daughter, and proceeded—"I need not, I presume, inform Mr. Markham Everard, that it cannot be our purpose to entertain him, or even to offer him a seat, in this poor hut."

"I will attend you most willingly to the Lodge," said the young gentleman. "I had, indeed, judged you were already there for the evening, and feared to intrude upon you. But if you would permit me, my dearest uncle, to escort my kinswoman and you back to the Lodge, believe me, amongst all which you have so often done of good and kind, you never conferred benefit that will be so dearly prized."

"You mistake me greatly, Mr. Markham Everard," replied the knight. "It is not our purpose to return to

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the Lodge to-night, nor, by Our Lady, to-morrow neither. I meant but to intimate to you in all courtesy, that at Woodstock Lodge you will find those for whom you are fitting society, and who, doubtless, will afford you a willing welcome; which I, sir, in this my present retreat, do not presume to offer to a person of your consequence."

"For Heaven's sake," said the young man, turning to Alice, "tell me how I am to understand language so mysterious."

Alice, to prevent his increasing the restrained anger of her father, compelled herself to answer, though it was with difficulty, "We are expelled from the Lodge by soldiers."

"Expelled—by soldiers!" exclaimed Everard, in surprise—"there is no legal warrant for this."

"None at all," answered the knight, in the same tone of cutting irony which he had all along used, "and yet as lawful a warrant, as for ought that has been wrought in England this twelvemonth and more. You are, I think, or were, an Inns-of-Court-man—marry, sir, your enjoyment of your profession is like that lease which a prodigal wishes to have of a wealthy widow. You have already survived the law which you studied, and its expiry doubtless has not been without a legacy—some decent pickings, some merciful increases, as the phrase goes. You have deserved it two ways—you wore buff and bandoleer, as well as wielded pen and ink—I have not heard if you held forth too."

"Think of me and speak of me as harshly as you will, sir," said Everard, submissively. "I have but this evil time, guided myself by my conscience, and father's commands."

"O, an you talk of conscience," said the old k  
"I must have mine eye upon you, as Hamlet  
Never yet did Puritan cheat so grossly as w



appealing to his conscience; and as for thy  
 er"—

le was about to proceed in a tone of the same invective, when the young man interrupted him, by saying, in a firm tone, "Sir Henry Lee, you have ever been nought noble—Say of me what you will, but speak not of my father what the ear of a son should not endure, and which yet his arm cannot resent. To do me such wrong is to insult an unarmed man, or to beat a captive."

Sir Henry paused, as if struck by the remark. "Thou hast spoken truth in that, Mark, wert thou the blackest Puritan whom hell ever vomited, to distract an unhappy country."

"Be that as you will to think it," replied Everard; "but let me not leave you to the shelter of this wretched hovel. The night is drawing to storm—let me but conduct you to the Lodge, and expel those intruders, who can, as yet at least, have no warrant for what they do. I will not linger a moment behind them, save just to deliver my father's message.—Grant me but this much, for the love you once bore me!"

"Yes, Mark," answered his uncle firmly, but sorrowfully, "thou speakest truth—I did love thee once. The bright-haired boy whom I taught to ride, to shoot, to hunt—whose hours of happiness were spent with me, wherever those of graver labours were employed—I did love that boy—ay, and I am weak enough to love even the memory of what he was.—But he is gone, Mark—he is gone; and in his room I only behold an avowed and determined rebel to his religion and to his king—a rebel more detestable on account of his success, the more infamous through the plundered wealth with which he *hopes* to gild his villany.—But I am poor, thou think'st, and should hold my peace, lest men say, 'Speak, sirrah, *when* you should.'—Know, however, that, indigent and

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plundered as I am, I feel myself dishonoured in holding even but this much talk with the tool of usurping rebels. —Go to the Lodge, if thou wilt—yonder lies the way—but think not that, to regain my dwelling there, or all the wealth I ever possessed in my wealthiest days, I would, willingly accompany thee three steps on the greensward. If I must be thy companion, it shall be only when thy red-coats have tied my hands behind me, and bound my legs beneath my horse's belly. Thou mayst be my fellow traveller then, I grant thee, if thou wilt, but not sooner."

Alice, who suffered cruelly during this dialogue, and was well aware that farther argument would only kindle the knight's resentment still more highly, ventured at last, in her anxiety, to make a sign to her cousin to break off the interview, and to retire, since her father commanded his absence in a manner so peremptory. Unhappily, she was observed by Sir Henry, who, concluding that what he saw was evidence of a private understanding betwixt the cousins, his wrath acquired new fuel, and it required the utmost exertion of self-command, and recollection of all that was due to his own dignity, to enable him to veil his real fury under the same ironical manner which he had adopted at the beginning of this angry interview.

"If thou art afraid," he said, "to trace our foot-glades by night, respected stranger, to whom I am haps bound to do honour as my successor in the care of these walks, here seems to be a modest damsel will be most willing to wait on thee, and be thy bearer.—Only, for her mother's sake, let some slight form of marriage between you—license or priest in these happy days, but *not like beggars in a ditch, with a hedge for a wall and a tinker for a priest.* I crave pardon for making such an officious and simple remark."



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re a Ranter—or one of the family  
riage rites as unnecessary, as Knipp  
eyden?"

"For mercy's sake, forbear such dre  
ather! and do you, Markham, begone  
and leave us to our fate—your presence  
rave."

"Jesting!" said Sir Henry, "I w  
serious—Raving!—I was never more cor  
never brook that falsehood should appro  
no more bear by my side a dishonoured  
dishonoured sword; and this unhappy  
that both can fail."

"Sir Henry," said young Everard,  
soul with a heavy crime, which be ass  
treating your daughter thus unjustly.  
since you denied her to me, when we we  
were powerful. I acquiesced in your p  
suit and intercourse. God knoweth  
—but I acquiesced. Neither is it to rer  
I now come hither, and have, I do ackn  
speech of her—not for her own sake onl  
also. Destruction hovers over you, rea  
pinions to stoop, and her talons to c  
look contemptuous as you will, such is  
is to protect both you and her that I am

"You refuse then my free gift," said  
"or perhaps you think it loaded with  
ditions?"

"Shame, shame on you, Sir Henry;  
waxing warm in his turn; "have your po  
so utterly warped every feeling of a fath  
speak with bitter mockery and scorn c  
*your own daughter's honour?*—Hold v  
*Alice*, and tell your father he has forg  
*fantastic spirit of loyalty.*—Know, Sir

I would prefer your daughter,  
which Heaven could bestow on me, I would  
it—my conscience would not permit me to do so—when  
I knew it must withdraw her from her duty to you."

"Your conscience is over scrupulous, young man ;—  
carry it to some dissenting rabbi, and he who takes all  
that comes to net, will teach thee it is sinning against our  
mercies to refuse any good thing that is freely offered  
to us."

"When it is freely offered, and kindly offered—not  
when the offer is made in irony and insult—Fare thee  
well, Alice—if aught could make me desire to profit by  
thy father's wild wish to cast thee from him in a moment  
of unworthy suspicion, it would be that, while indulging  
in such sentiments, Sir Henry Lee is tyrannically oppress-  
ing the creature, who of all others is most dependent on  
his kindness—who of all others will most feel his severity,  
and whom, of all others, he is most bound to cherish  
and support."

"Do not fear for me, Mr. Everard," exclaimed Alice,  
aroused from her timidity by a dread of the consequences  
not unlikely to ensue, where civil war sets relations, as  
well as fellow-citizens, in opposition to each other.—  
"Oh, begone, I conjure you, begone ! Nothing stands  
betwixt me and my father's kindness—but these unhappy  
family divisions—but your ill-timed presence here—for  
Heaven's sake, leave us !"

"Soh, mistress !" answered the hot old cavalier, "y  
play lady paramount already ; and who but you !—  
would dictate to our train, I warrant, like Goneril  
Regan ! But I tell thee, no man shall leave my  
—and, humble as it is, *this* is now my house  
*he has aught to say to me that is to be said*  
*this young man now speaks, with a bent brow :*  
*tone—Speak out, sir, and say your worst !"*

"Fear not my temper, Mrs. Alice," said

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equal firmness and placidity of manner ; " and you, Henry, do not think that if I speak firmly, I mean before to speak in anger, or officiously. You have vexed me with much, and, were I guided by the wild spirit of romantic chivalry, much which, even from so near a relative, I ought not, as being by birth, and in the world's estimation, a gentleman, to pass over without reply. Is it your pleasure to give me patient hearing?"

" If you stand on your defence," answered the stout old knight, " God forbid that you should not challenge a patient hearing—ay, though your pleading were two parts disloyalty and one blasphemy—Only, be brief—this has already lasted but too long."

" I will, Sir Henry," replied the young man ; " yet it is hard to crowd into a few sentences the defence of a life which, though short, has been a busy one—too busy, your indignant gesture would assert. But I deny it ; I have drawn my sword neither hastily, nor without due consideration, for a people whose rights have been trampled on, and whose consciences have been oppressed—Frown not, sir—such is not your view of the contest, but such is mine. For my religious principles, at which you have scoffed, believe me, that though they depend not on set forms, they are no less sincere than your own, and thus far purer—excuse the word—that they are unmingled with the bloodthirsty dictates of a barbarous age, which you and others have called the code of chivalrous honour. Not my own natural disposition, but the better doctrine which my creed has taught, enables me to bear your harsh revilings without answering in a similar tone of wrath and reproach. You may carry insult to extremity against me at your pleasure—not on account of our relationship alone, but because I am bound in charity to endure it. This, Sir Henry, is my from one of our house. But, with forbearance far r

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than this requires, I can refuse at your hands the gift; which, most of all things under Heaven, I should desire to obtain, because duty calls upon her to sustain and comfort you, and because it were sin to permit you, in your blindness, to spurn your comforter from your side.—Farewell, sir—not in anger, but in pity—We may meet in a better time, when your heart and your principles shall master the unhappy prejudices by which they are now overclouded.—Farewell—farewell, Alice !”

The last words were repeated twice, and in a tone of feeling and passionate grief, which differed utterly from the steady and almost severe tone in which he had addressed Sir Henry Lee. He turned and left the hut so soon as he had uttered these last words ; and, as if ashamed of the tenderness which had mingled with his accents, the young Commonwealth's-man turned and walked sternly and resolvedly forth into the moonlight, which now was spreading its broad light and autumnal shadows over the woodland

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"Have done better?" said Phoebe, "seeing the old man had nothing left either for Mrs. Alice or himself ; and as for Mr. Mark Everard and our young lady, oh ! they had spoken such loving things to each other as are not to be found in the history of Argalus and Parthenia, who, as the story-book tells, were the truest pair of lovers in all Arcadia, and Oxfordshire to boot."

Old Goody Jellycot had popped her scarlet hood into the kitchen more than once while the scene was proceeding ; but, as the worthy dame was parcel blind and more than parcel deaf, knowledge was excluded by two principal entrances ; and though she comprehended, by a sort of general instinct, that the gentlefolk were at high words, yet why they chose Joceline's hut for the scene of their dispute was as great a mystery as the subject of the quarrel.

But what was the state of the old cavalier's mood, thus contradicted, as his most darling principles had been, by the last words of his departing nephew ? The truth is, that he was less thoroughly moved than his daughter expected ; and in all probability his nephew's bold defence of his religious and political opinions rather pacified than aggravated his displeasure. Although sufficiently impatient of contradiction, still evasion and subterfuge were more alien to the blunt old Ranger's nature than manly vindication and direct opposition ; and he was wont to say, that he ever loved the buck best who stood boldest at bay. He graced his nephew's departure, however, with a quotation from Shakspeare, whom, as many others do, he was wont to quote from a sort of habit and respect, as a favourite of his unfortunate master, without having either much real taste for his works, or great skill in applying the passages which he retained on his memory.

"Mark," he said, "mark this, Alice—the devil can quote Scripture for his purpose. Why, this young fanatic

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cousin of thine, with no more beard than I have seen on a clown playing Maid Marion on May-day, when the village barber had shaved him in too great a hurry, shall match any bearded Presbyterian or Independent of them all, in laying down his doctrines and his uses, and be-thumping us with his texts and his homilies. I would worthy and learned Doctor Rochecliffe had been here, with his battery ready mounted from the Vulgate, and the Septuagint, and what not—he would have battered the presbyterian spirit out of him with a wanion. However, I am glad the young man is no sneaker ; for, were a man of the devil's opinion in religion, and of Old Noll's in politics, he were better open on it full cry, than deceive you by hunting counter, or running a false scent. Come—wipe thine eyes—the fray is over, and not like to be stirred again soon, I trust."

Encouraged by these words, Alice rose, and, bewildered as she was, endeavoured to superintend the arrangements for their meal and their repose in their new habitation. But her tears fell so fast, they marred her counterfeited diligence ; and it was well for her that Phœbe, though too ignorant and too simple to comprehend the extent of her distress, could afford her material assistance, in lack of mere sympathy.

With great readiness and address, the damsel set about everything that was requisite for preparing the supper and the beds ; now screaming into Dame Jellycot's ear, now whispering into her mistress's, and artfully managing, as if she was merely the agent, under Alice's orders. When the cold viands were set forth, Sir Her Lee kindly pressed his daughter to take refreshment ~~if~~ to make up, indirectly, for his previous harsh ~~words~~ *towards her ; while he himself, like an experienced signer, showed, that neither the mortification* ~~swells~~ *of the day, nor the thoughts of what was to-morrow, could diminish his appetite for supper*



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was his favourite meal. He ate up two-thirds of the oapon, and, devoting the first bumper to the happy restoration of Charles, second of the name, he finished a quart of wine ; for he belonged to a school accustomed to feed the flame of their loyalty with copious brimmers. He even sang a verse of " The King shall enjoy his own again," in which Phoebe, half-sobbing, and Dame Jellycot, screaming against time and tune, were contented to lend their aid, to cover Mistress Alice's silence.

At length the jovial knight betook himself to his rest on the keeper's straw pallet, in a recess adjoining to the kitchen, and, unaffected by his change of dwelling, slept fast and deep. Alice had less quiet rest in old Goody Jellycot's wicker couch, in the inner apartment ; while the dame and Phoebe slept on a mattress, stuffed with dry leaves, in the same chamber, soundly as those whose daily toil gains their daily bread, and whom morning calls up only to renew the toils of yesterday.

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## CHAP. V.

*My tongue pads slowly under this new language,  
And starts and stumbles at these uncouth phrases.  
They may be great in worth and weight, but hang  
Upon the native glibness of my speech,  
Like Saul's plate-armour on the shepherd boy,  
Encumbering and not arming him.—J. B.*

 S Markham Everard pursued his way towards the Lodge, through one of the long sweeping glades which traversed the forest, varying in breadth, till the trees were now so close that the boughs made darkness over his head, then receding farther to let in glimpses of the moon, and anon opening yet wider into little meadows, or savannas, on which the moonbeams lay in silvery silence ; as he thus proceeded

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his lonely course, the various effects produced by that delicious light on the oaks, whose dark leaves, gnarled branches, and massive trunks it gilded, more or less partially, might have drawn the attention of a poet or a painter.

But if Everard thought of anything saving the painful scene in which he had just played his part, and of which the result seemed the destruction of all his hopes, it was of the necessary guard to be observed in his night-walk. The times were dangerous and unsettled; the roads full of disbanded soldiers, and especially of royalists, who made their political opinions a pretext for disturbing the country with marauding parties and robberies. Deer-stealers also, who are ever a desperate banditti, had of late infested Woodstock Chase. In short, the dangers of the place and period were such, that Markham Everard wore his loaded pistols at his belt, and carried his drawn sword under his arm, that he might be prepared for whatever peril should cross his path.

He heard the bells of Woodstock Church ring curfew, just as he was crossing one of the little meadows we have described, and they ceased as he entered an over-shadowed and twilight part of the path beyond. It was there that he heard some one whistling; and, as the sound became clearer, it was plain the person was advancing towards him. This could hardly be a friend for the party to which he belonged rejected, generally speaking, all music, unless psalmody. "If a man merry, let him sing psalms," was a text which they pleased to interpret as literally and to as little purport *they did some others*; yet it was too continued to be a signal amongst night-walkers, and too cheerful to argue any purpose of concealment of the traveller, who presently exchanged his singing, and trolled forth the following

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~~My~~ tune, with which the old cavaliers were wont to wake the night-owl :—

Hey for cavaliers ! Ho for cavaliers !

Pray for cavaliers !

Rub a dub—rub a dub !

Have at old Beelzebub—

Oliver smokes for fear.

" I should know that voice," said Everard, uncocking the pistol which he had drawn from his belt, but continuing to hold it in his hand. Then came another fragment :—

Hash them—slash them—

All to pieces dash them.

" So ho ! " cried Markham, " who goes there, and for whom ? "

" For Church and King," answered a voice, which presently added, " No, d—n me—I mean *against* Church and King, and for the people that are uppermost—I forget which they are."

" Roger Wildrake, as I guess ? " said Everard.

" The same—Gentleman ; of Squattlesea-mere, in the moist county of Lincoln."

" Wildrake ! " said Markham—" Wildgoose you should be called. You have been moistening your own throat to some purpose, and using it to gabble tunes very suitable to the times, to be sure ! "

" Faith, the tune's a pretty tune enough, Mark, only out of fashion a little—the more's the pity."

" What could I expect," said Everard, " but to meet some ranting, drunken cavalier, as desperate and dangerous as night and sack usually make them ? What if I had rewarded your melody by a ball in the gullet ? "

" Why, there would have been a piper paid—that's all," said Wildrake. " But wherefore come you this way now ? I was about to seek you at the hut."

" I have been obliged to leave it—I will tell you *cause* hereafter," replied Markham.

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"What! the old play-hunting cavalier was cross, or Chloe was unkind?"

"Jest not, Wildrake—it is all over with me," said Everard.

"The devil it is," exclaimed Wildrake, "and you take it thus quietly!—Zounds! let us back together—I'll plead your cause for you—I know how to tickle up an old knight and a pretty maiden—Let me alone for putting you *rectus in curia*, you canting rogue.—D—n me, Sir Henry Lee, says I, your nephew is a piece of a Puritan—it won't deny—but I'll uphold him a gentleman and a pretty fellow, for all that.—Madam, says I, you may think your cousin looks like a psalm-singing weaver, in that bare felt, and with that rascally brown cloak; that band, which looks like a baby's clout, and those loose boots, which have a whole calf-skin in each of them,—but let him wear on the one side of his head a castor, with a plume befitting his quality; give him a good Toledo by his side, with a broidered belt and an inlaid hilt, instead of the ton of iron contained in that basket-hilted black Andrew Ferrara; put a few smart words in his mouth—and, blood and wounds! madam, says I"—

"Prithee, truce with this nonsense, Wildrake," said Everard, "and tell me if you are sober enough to hear a few words of sober reason?"

"Pshaw! man, I did but crack a brace of quarts with yonder puritanic, roundheaded soldiers, up yonder at the town; and rat me but I passed myself for the best man of the party; twanged my nose, and turned up my eyes, as I took my can—Pah! the very wi tasted of hypocrisy. I think the rogue corp  
*smoked something at last—as for the common fell never stir, but they asked me to say grace over an quart!*"

"This is just what I wished to speak with you a

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**Wildrake," said Markham—"You hold me, I am sure, for your friend?"**

**"True as steel—Chums at College and at Lincoln's Inn—we have been Nisus and Euryalus, Theseus and Pirithous, Orestes and Pylades; and, to sum up the whole with a puritanic touch, David and Jonathan, all in one breath. Not even politics, the wedge that rends families and friendships asunder, as iron rives oak, have been able to split us."**

**"True," answered Markham; "and when you followed the King to Nottingham, and I enrolled under Essex, we swore, at our parting, that whichever side was victorious, he of us who adhered to it should protect his less fortunate comrade."**

**"Surely, man, surely; and have you not protected me accordingly? Did you not save me from hanging? and am I not indebted to you for the bread I eat?"**

**"I have but done that which, had the times been otherwise, you, my dear Wildrake, would, I am sure, have done for me. But, as I said, that is just what I wished to speak to you about. Why render the task of protecting you more difficult than it must necessarily be at any rate? Why thrust thyself into the company of soldiers, or such like, where thou art sure to be warmed into betraying thyself? Why come hollowing and whooping out cavalier ditties, like a drunken trooper of Prince Rupert, or one of Wilmot's swaggering body-guards?"**

**"Because I may have been both one and t'other in my day, for aught that you know," replied Wildrake. "But, oddsfish! is it necessary I should always be reminding you, that our obligation of mutual protection, our league of offensive and defensive, as I may call it, was to be carried into effect without reference to the politics or religion of the party protected, or the least obligation on him to conform to those of his friend?"**

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"True," said Everard ; " but with this most necessary qualification, that the party should submit to such outward conformity to the times as should make it more easy and safe for his friend to be of service to him. Now, you are perpetually breaking forth, to the hazard of your own safety and my credit."

"I tell you, Mark, and I would tell your namesake the apostle, that you are hard on me. You have practised sobriety and hypocrisy from your hanging sleeves till your Geneva cassock—from the cradle to this day,—and it is a thing of nature to you ; and you are surprised that a rough, rattling, honest fellow, accustomed to speak truth all his life, and especially when he found it at the bottom of a flask, cannot be so perfect a prig as thyself—Zooks ! there is no equality betwixt us—A trained diver might as well, because he can retain his breath for ten minutes without inconvenience, upbraid a poor devil for being like to burst in twenty seconds, at the bottom of ten fathoms water—And, after all, considering the guise is so new to me, I think I bear myself indifferently well—try me !"

"Are there any more news from Worcester fight ?" asked Everard, in a tone so serious that it imposed on his companion, who replied in his genuine character—

"Worse !—d—n me, worse an hundred times than reported—totally broken. Noll hath certainly sold himself to the devil, and his lease will have an end one day—that is all our present comfort."

"What ! and would this be your answer to the first redcoat who asked the question ?" said Everard. "Mr thinks you would find a speedy passport to the next *cor de garde*."

"Nay, nay," answered Wildrake, "I thought asked me in your own person.—Lack-a-day ! a mercy—a glorifying mercy—a crowning mercy—a saving—an uplifting—I profess the malignant

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~~Marched from Dan to Beersheba~~—smitten hip and thigh,  
~~in~~ until the going down of the sun ! ”

“ Hear you aught of Colonel Thornhaugh's wounds ? ”

“ He is dead,” answered Wildrake, “ that's one comfort—the roundheaded rascal !—Nay, hold ! it was but a trip of the tongue—I meant, the sweet godly youth.”

“ And hear you aught of the young man, King of Scotland, as they call him ? ” said Everard.

“ Nothing, but that he is hunted like a partridge on the mountains. May God deliver him, and confound his enemies !—Zoons, Mark Everard, I can fool it no longer. Do you not remember, that at the Lincoln's-Inn gambols—though you did not mingle much in them, I think—I used always to play as well as any of them when it came to the action, but they could never get me to rehearse conformably. It's the same at this day. I hear your voice, and I answer to it in the true tone of my heart ; but when I am in the company of your snuffling friends, you have seen me act my part indifferent well.”

“ But indifferent, indeed,” replied Everard ; “ however, there is little call on you to do aught, save to be modest and silent. Speak little, and lay aside, if you can, your big oaths and swaggering looks—set your hat even on your brows.”

“ Ay, that is the curse ! I have been always noted for the jaunty manner in which I wear my castor—Hard when a man's merits become his enemies ! ”

“ You must remember you are my clerk.”

“ Secretary,” answered Wildrake ; “ let it be secretary, if you love me.”

“ It must be clerk, and nothing else—plain clerk—and remember to be civil and obedient,” replied Everard.

“ But you should not lay on your commands with so much ostentatious superiority, Master Markham Everard. Remember I am your senior of three years' standing. Confound me, if I know how to take it ! ”

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"Was ever such a fantastic wronghead!—For my sake, if not for thine own, bend thy freakish folly to listen to reason. Think that I have incurred both risk and shame on thy account."

"Nay, thou art a right good fellow, Mark," replied the cavalier; "and for thy sake I will do much—but remember to cough and cry hem! when thou seest me like to break bounds. And now, tell me whither we are bound for the night?"

"To Woodstock Lodge, to look after my uncle's property," answered Markham Everard; "I am informed that soldiers have taken possession—Yet how could that be if thou foundest the party drinking in Woodstock?"

"There was a kind of commissary or steward, or some such rogue had gone down to the Lodge," replied Wildrake; "I had a peep at him."

"Indeed!" replied Everard,

"Ay, verily," said Wildrake, "to speak your own language. Why, as I passed through the park in quest of you, scarce half-an-hour since, I saw a light in the Lodge—Step this way, you will see it yourself."

"In the north-west angle?" returned Everard. "It is from a window in what they call Victor Lee's apartment."

"Well," resumed Wildrake, "I had been long one of Lundsford's lads, and well used to patrolling duty—So, rat me, says I, if I leave a light in my rear, without knowing what it means. Besides, Mark, thou hadst said so much to me of thy pretty cousin, I thought I might as well have a peep, if I could."

"Thoughtless, incorrigible man! to what dangers you expose yourself and your friends, in mere wantonness! But go on."

"By this fair moonshine, I believe thou art jealous, Mark Everard!" replied his gay companion; "th



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mission ; for, in any case, I, who was to see the lady, appealed by honour against the charms of my friend's sex—Then the lady was not to see me, so could make comparisons to thy disadvantage, thou knowest—Nay, as it fell out, neither of us saw the other at all."

Of that I am well aware. Mrs. Alice left the Lodge before sunset, and never returned. What didst thou see to introduce with such preface?"

Nay, no great matter," replied Wildrake ; " only, clinging upon a sort of buttress (for I can climb like any cat that ever mewed in any gutter), and holding on by vines and creepers which grew around, I obtained a position where I could see into the inside of that same room, your thou spokest of just now."

And what saw'st thou there?" once more demanded Everard.

Nay, no great matter, as I said before," replied the liar ; " for in these times it is no new thing to see fellows carousing in royal or noble chambers. I saw two gallions engaged in emptying a solemn stoup of strong waters, and dispatching a huge venison pasty, with greasy mess, for their convenience, they had placed the lady's work-table—One of them was trying an air of lute."

The profane villains ! " exclaimed Everard, " it was a waste."

Well said, comrade—I am glad your phlegm can be cooled. I did but throw in these incidents of the lute and the table, to try if it were possible to get a spark of human spirit out of you, besanctified as you are."

What like were the men?" said young Everard.

The one a slouch-hatted, long-cloaked, sour-faced rascal, like the rest of you, whom I took to be the steward or commissary I heard spoken of in the town. The other was a short sturdy fellow, with a wood-knife in his girdle, and a long quarterstaff lying beside him

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black-haired knave, with white teeth and a merry countenance—one of the under-rangers or bow-bearers of these walks, I fancy."

"They must have been Desborough's favourite, Trusty Tomkins," said Everard, "and Joceline Joliffe, the keeper. Tomkins is Desborough's right hand—an Independent, and hath pourings forth, as he calls them. Some think that his gifts have the better of his grace. I have heard of his abusing opportunities."

"They were improving them when I saw them," replied Wildrake, "and made the bottle smoke for it—when, as the devil would have it, a stone, which had been dislodged from the crumbling buttress, gave way under my weight. A clumsy fellow like thee would have been so long thinking what was to be done, that he must needs have followed it before he could make up his mind; but I, Mark, I hopped like a squirrel to an ivy twig, and stood fast—was well-nigh shot, though, for the noise alarmed them both. They looked to the oriel, and saw me on the outside; the fanatic fellow took out a pistol—as they have always such texts in readiness hanging beside the little clasped Bible, thou know'st—the keeper seized his hunting pole—I treated them both to a roar and a grin—thou must know I can grimace like a baboon—I learned the trick from a French player, who could twist his jaws into a pair of nutcrackers—and therewithal I dropped myself sweetly on the grass, and ran off so trippingly, keeping the dark side of the wall as long as I could, that I am well-nigh persuaded they thought I was their kinsman, the devil, come among them uncalled. They were abominably startled."

"Thou art most fearfully rash, Wildrake," said his companion; "we are now bound for the house—what if *they should remember thee?*"

"Why, it is no treason, is it? No one has paid *sleeping* since Tom of Coventry's days! and if he c

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~~For~~ reckoning, belike it was for a better treat than ~~fine~~. But trust me, they will no more know me than a man who had only seen your friend Noll at a conventicle of saints, would know the same Oliver on horseback, and charging with his lobster-tailed squadron; or the same Noll cracking a jest and a bottle with wicked Waller the poet."

"Hush! not a word of Oliver, as thou dost value thyself and me. It is ill jesting with the rock you may have split on.—But here is the gate—we will disturb these honest gentlemen's recreations."

As he spoke, he applied the large and ponderous knocker to the hall-door.

"Rat-tat-tat-too!" said Wildrake; "there is a fine alarm to you cuckolds and roundheads." He then half-mimicked, half-sung, the march so called:—

Cuckolds, come dig, cuckolds, come dig;  
Round about cuckolds, come dance to my jig!

"By Heaven! this passes Midsummer frenzy," said Everard, turning angrily on him.

"Not a bit, not a bit," replied Wildrake; "it is but a slight expectoration, just like what one makes before beginning a long speech. I will be grave for an hour together, now I have got that point of war out of my head."

As he spoke, steps were heard in the hall, and the wicket of the great door was partly opened, but secured with a chain in case of accidents. The visage of Tomkins, and that of Joceline beneath it, appeared at the chink, illuminated by the lamp which the latter held in his hand, and Tomkins demanded the meaning of this alarm.

"I demand instant admittance!" said Everard. "Joliffe, you know me well?"

"I do, sir," replied Joceline, "and could admit"  
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with all my heart ; but, alas ! sir, you see I am not key-keeper—Here is the gentleman whose warrant I must walk by—The Lord help me, seeing times are such as they be ! ”

“ And when that gentleman, who I think may be Master Desborough’s valet ”——

“ His honour’s unworthy secretary, an it please you,” interposed Tomkins ; while Wildrake whispered in Everard’s ear, “ I will be no longer secretary. Mark, thou wert quite right—the clerk must be the more gentlemanly calling.”

“ And if you are Master Desborough’s secretary, I presume you know me and my condition well enough,” said Everard, addressing the Independent, “ not to hesitate to admit me and my attendant to a night’s quarters in the Lodge ? ”

“ Surely not, surely not,” said the Independent—“ that is, if your worship thinks you would be better accommodated here than up at the house of entertainment in the town, which men unprofitably call Saint George’s Inn. There is but confined accommodation here, your honour—and we have been frayed out of our lives already by the visitation of Satan—albeit his fiery dart is now quenched.”

“ This may be all well in its place, Sir Secretary,” said Everard ; “ and you may find a corner for it when you are next tempted to play the preacher. But I will take it for no apology for keeping me here in the cold harvest wind ; and if not presently received, and suitably too, I will report you to your master for insolence in your office.”

The Secretary of Desborough did not dare offer far opposition ; for it is well known that Desborough himself only held his consequence as a kinsman of Crom and the Lord General, who was well-nigh paragon already, was known to be strongly favourable both

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elder and younger Everard. It is true, they were Presbyterians and he an Independent ; and that though sharing those sentiments of correct morality and more devoted religious feeling, by which, with few exceptions, the Parliament party were distinguished, the Everards were not disposed to carry these attributes to the extreme of enthusiasm, practised by so many others at the time. Yet it was well known that whatever might be Cromwell's own religious creed, he was not uniformly bounded by it in the choice of his favourites, but extended his countenance to those who could serve him, even although, according to the phrase of the time, they came out of the darkness of Egypt. The character of the elder Everard stood very high for wisdom and sagacity ; besides, being of a good family and competent fortune, his adherence would lend a dignity to any side he might espouse. Then his son had been a distinguished and successful soldier, remarkable for the discipline he maintained among his men, the bravery which he showed in the time of action, and the humanity with which he was always ready to qualify the consequences of victory. Such men were not to be neglected, when many signs combined to show that the parties in the state, who had successfully accomplished the deposition and death of the King, were speedily to quarrel among themselves about the division of the spoils. The two Everards were therefore much courted by Cromwell, and their influence with him was supposed to be so great, that trusty Master Secretary Tomkins cared not to expose himself to risk, by contending with Colonel Everard for such a trifle as a night's lodging or a greater thing.

Joceline was active on his side—more lights were obtained—more wood thrown on the fire—and the two newly arrived strangers were introduced into Victor Lee's parlour, as it was called, from the picture over chimney-piece, which we have already described. It

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several minutes ere Colonel Everard could recover his general stoicism of deportment, so strongly was he impressed by finding himself in the apartment, under whose roof he had passed so many of the happiest hours of his life. There was the cabinet which he had seen opened with such feelings of delight when Sir Henry Lee deigned to give him instructions in fishing, and to exhibit hooks and lines, together with all the materials for making the artificial fly, then little known. There hung the ancient family picture, which, from some odd mysterious expressions of his uncle relating to it, had become to his boyhood, nay, his early youth, a subject of curiosity and of fear. He remembered how, when left alone in the apartment, the searching eye of the old warrior seemed always bent upon him, in whatever part of the room he placed himself; and how his childish imagination was perturbed at a phenomenon, for which he could not account.

With these came a thousand dearer and warmer recollections of his early attachment to his pretty cousin Alice, when he assisted her at her lessons, brought water for her flowers, or accompanied her while she sung; and he remembered that while her father looked at them with a good-humoured and careless smile, he had once heard him mutter, "And if it should turn out so—why, it might be best for both," and the theories of happiness he had reared on those words. All these visions had been dispelled by the trumpet of war, which called Sir Henry Lee and himself to opposite sides; and the transactions of this very day had shown, that even Everard's success as a soldier and a statesman seemed absolutely to prohibit the chance of their being revived.

He was waked out of this unpleasing reverie by the approach of Joceline, who, being possibly a seasoned soldier, had made the additional arrangements with more expedition and accuracy; than could have been expected from a person engaged as he had been since night-fall.

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Now wished to know the Colonel's directions for the  
"Would he eat anything?"

"No."

Did his honour choose to accept Sir Henry Lee's bed,  
which was ready prepared?"

"Yes."

"That of Mistress Alice Lee should be prepared for  
the Secretary."

"On pain of thine ears—No," replied Everard.

"Where then was the worthy Secretary to be quartered?"

"In the dog-kennel, if you list," replied Colonel  
Everard; "but," added he, stepping to the sleeping  
apartment of Alice, which opened from the parlour,  
locking it, and taking out the key, "no one shall profane  
this chamber."

"Had his honour any other commands for the night?"

"None, save to clear the apartment of yonder man.  
My clerk will remain with me—I have orders which must  
be written out.—Yet stay—Thou gavest my letter this  
morning to Mistress Alice?"

"I did."

"Tell me, good Joceline, what she said when she  
received it?"

"She seemed much concerned, sir; and indeed I think  
that she wept a little—but indeed she seemed very much  
distressed."

"And what message did she send to me?"

"None, may it please your honour—She began to say,  
'Tell my cousin Everard that I will communicate my  
uncle's kind purpose to my father, if I can get fitting  
opportunity—but that I greatly fear'—and there checked  
herself, as it were, and said, 'I will write to my cousin;  
and as it may be late ere I have an opportunity of speak-  
ing with my father, do thou come for my answer after  
service.'—So I went to church myself, to while away  
time; but when I returned to the Chase, I found this

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had summoned my master to surrender, and, right or wrong, I must put him in possession of the Lodge. I would fain have given your honour a hint that the old knight and my young mistress were like to take you on the form, but I could not mend the matter."

"Thou hast done well, good fellow, and I will remember thee.—And now, my masters," he said, advancing to the brace of clerks or secretaries, who had in the meanwhile sat quietly down beside the stone bottle, and made up acquaintance over a glass of its contents—"Let me remind you, that the night wears late."

"There is something cries tinkle, tinkle, in the bottle yet," said Wildrake, in reply.

"Hem! hem! hem!" coughed the Colonel of the Parliament service; and if his lips did not curse his companion's imprudence, I will not answer for what arose in his heart—"Well!" he said, observing that Wildrake had filled his own glass and Tomkins's, "take that parting glass and begone."



ow, fool Wildrake, begone!

ing to the knight's apartment.

, thou hast secured the lady's for thyself? I  
put the key in thy pocket."

ld not—indeed I could not sleep in that apart-  
an sleep nowhere—but I will watch in this arm-  
have made him place wood for repairing the  
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askance, as the other retreated into the bedroom  
very steady pace—"He is reckless, intemperate  
te; and if I cannot get him safely shipped for  
certainly he both his own ruin and mine  
ous and won'

ing glass and begone."

"Would you not be pleased to hear first," said Wildrake, "how this honest gentleman saw the devil to-night look through a pane of yonder window, and how he thinks he had a mighty strong resemblance to your worship's humble slave and varlet scribbler? Would you but hear this, sir, and just sip a glass of this very recommendable strong waters?"

"I will drink none, sir," said Colonel Everard sternly; "and I have to tell *you*, that you have drunken a glass too much already.—Mr. Tomkins, sir, I wish you good night."

"A word in season at parting," said Tomkins, standing up behind the long leathern back of a chair, hemming and snuffling as if preparing for an exhortation.

"Excuse me, sir," replied Markham Everard sternly; "*you are not now sufficiently yourself to guide the  
tion of others.*"

## WOODSTOCK.

to them that reject!" said the Secretary, Commissioners, stalking out of the room—the rest in shutting the door, or suppressed for fear of

acc.

And now, fool Wildrake, begone to thy bed—yonder lies," pointing to the knight's apartment.

"What, thou hast secured the lady's for thyself? I saw thee put the key in thy pocket."

"I would not—indeed I could not sleep in that apartment—I can sleep nowhere—but I will watch in this arm-chair.—I have made him place wood for repairing the fire.—Good now, go to bed thyself, and sleep off thy liquor."

"Liquor!—I laugh thee to scorn, Mark—thou art a milksop, and the son of a milksop, and know'st not what a good fellow can do in the way of crushing an honest cup."

"The whole vices of his faction are in this poor fellow individually," said the Colonel to himself, eyeing his protégé askance, as the other retreated into the bedroom with no very steady pace—"He is reckless, intemperate, dissolute; and if I cannot get him safely shipped for France, he will certainly be both his own ruin and mine.—Yet, withal, he is kind, brave, and generous, and would have kept the faith with me which he now expects from me; and in what consists the merit of our truth, if we observe not our plighted word when we have promised, to our hurt? I will take the liberty, however, to secure myself against further interruption on his part."

So saying, he locked the door of communication betwixt the sleeping room, to which the cavalier had retreated, and the parlour;—and then, after pacing the floor thoughtfully, returned to his seat, trimmed the lamp, and drew out a number of letters.—"I will read these over once more," he said, "that, if possible, the thought of public affairs may expel this keen sense of personal sorrow."

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Gracious Providence, where is this to end? We have sacrificed the peace of our families, the warmest wishes of our young hearts, to right the country in which we were born, and to free her from oppression; yet it appears, that every step we have made towards liberty, has but brought us in view of new and more terrific perils, as he who travels in a mountainous region, is, by every step which elevates him higher, placed in a situation of more imminent hazard."

He read long and attentively various tedious and embarrassed letters, in which the writers, placing before him the glory of God, and the freedom and liberties of England, as their supreme ends, could not, by all the ambagious expressions they made use of, prevent the shrewd eye of Markham Everard from seeing, that self-interest and views of ambition were the principal moving springs at the bottom of their plots.

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government; Everard and his father had, like many others, turned their eyes to General Cromwell, as the person whose valour had made him the darling of the army, whose strong sagacity had hitherto predominated over the high talents by which he had been assailed in Parliament, as well as over his enemies in the field, and who was alone in the situation to *settle the nation*, as the phrase then went; or, in other words, to dictate the mode of government. The father and son were both reputed to stand high in the General's favour. But Markham Everard was conscious of some particulars, which induced him to doubt whether Cromwell actually, and at heart, bore either to his father or to himself that good-will which was generally believed. He knew him for a profound politician, who could veil for any length of time his real sentiments of men and things, until they could be displayed without prejudice to his interest. And he moreover knew that the General was not likely to forget the opposition which the Presbyterian party had offered to what Oliver called the Great Matter—the trial, namely, and execution of the King. In this opposition, his father and he had anxiously concurred, nor had the arguments, nor even the half-expressed threats of Cromwell, induced them to flinch from that course, far less to permit their names to be introduced into the commission nominated to sit in judgment on that memorable occasion.

This hesitation had occasioned some temporary coldness between the General and the Everards, father and son. But as the latter remained in the army, and bore arms under Cromwell, both in Scotland, and finally at Worcester, his services very frequently called forth the approbation of his commander. After the fight at Worcester, in particular, he was among the number of those officers on whom Oliver, rather considering the actual and practical extent of his own power, than the name under w

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he exercised it, was with difficulty withheld from imposing the dignity of Knights-Bannerets at his own will and pleasure. It therefore seemed that all recollection of former disagreement was obliterated, and that the Everards had regained their former stronghold in the General's affections. There were, indeed, several who doubted this, and who endeavoured to bring over this distinguished young officer to some other of the parties which divided the infant Commonwealth. But to these proposals he turned a deaf ear. Enough of blood, he said, had been spilled—it was time that the nation should have repose under a firmly-established government; of strength sufficient to protect property, and of lenity enough to encourage the return of tranquillity. This, he thought, could only be accomplished by means of Cromwell, and the greater part of England was of the same opinion. It is true, that, in thus submitting to the domination of a successful soldier, those who did so forgot the principles upon which they had drawn the sword against the late King. But in revolutions, stern and high principles are often obliged to give way to the current of existing circumstances; and in many a case, where wars have been waged for points of metaphysical right, they have been at last gladly terminated, upon the mere hope of obtaining general tranquillity, as after many a long siege, a garrison is often glad to submit on mere security for life and limb.

Colonel Everard, therefore, felt that the support which he afforded Cromwell was only under the idea, that, amid a choice of evils, the least was likely to ensue from a man of the General's wisdom and valour being placed at the head of the state; and he was sensible, that Ol' himself was likely to consider his attachment as *lukev and imperfect, and measure his gratitude for it up same limited scale.*

*In the meanwhile, however, circumstances compell to make trial of the General's friendship. The seques*

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of Woodstock, and the warrant to the Commissioners to dispose of it as national property, had been long granted, but the interest of the elder Everard had for weeks and months deferred its execution. The hour was now approaching when the blow could be no longer parried, especially as Sir Henry Lee, on his side, resisted every proposal of submitting himself to the existing government, and was therefore, now that his hour of grace was passed, enrolled in the list of stubborn and irreclaimable malignants, with whom the Council of State was determined no longer to keep terms. The only mode of protecting the old knight and his daughter, was to interest, if possible, the General himself in the matter ; and revolving all the circumstances connected with their intercourse, Colonel Everard felt that a request, which would so immediately interfere with the interests of Desborough, the brother-in-law of Cromwell, and one of the present Commissioners, was putting to a very severe trial the friendship of the latter. Yet no alternative remained.

With this view, and agreeably to a request from Cromwell, who at parting had been very urgent to have his written opinion upon public affairs, Colonel Everard passed the earlier part of the night in arranging his ideas upon the state of the Commonwealth, in a plan which he thought likely to be acceptable to Cromwell, as it exhorted him, under the aid of Providence, to become the saviour of the state, by convoking a free Parliament, and by their aid placing himself at the head of some form of liberal and established government, which might supersede the state of anarchy, in which the nation was otherwise likely to be merged. Taking a general view of the totally broken condition of the Royalists, and of the various factions which now convulsed the state, he showed how this might be done without bloodshed or violence. From this topic he descended to the propriety of keeping the becoming state of the Executive Government, in

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hands soever it should be lodged, and thus showed Cromwell, as the future Stadtholder, or Consul, or Lieutenant-General of Great Britain and Ireland, a prospect of demesne and residences becoming his dignity. Then he naturally passed to the disparking and destroying of the royal residences of England, made a woeful picture of the demolition which impended over Woodstock, and interceded for the preservation of that beautiful seat, as a matter of personal favour, in which he found himself deeply interested.

Colonel Everard, when he had finished his letter, did not find himself greatly risen in his own opinion. In the course of his political conduct, he had till this hour avoided mixing up personal motives with his public grounds of action, and yet he now felt himself making such a composition. But he comforted himself, or at least silenced this displeasing recollection, with the consideration, that the weal of Britain, studied under the aspect of the times, absolutely required that Cromwell should be at the head of the government ; and that the interest of Sir Henry Lee, or rather his safety and his existence, no less emphatically demanded the preservation of Woodstock, and his residence there. Was it a fault of his, that the same road should lead to both these ends, or that his private interest, and that of the country, should happen to mix in the same letter ? He hardened himself, therefore, to the act, made up and addressed his packet to the Lord-General, and then sealed it with his seal of arms. This done, he lay back in the chair ; and, in spite of his expectations to the contrary, fell asleep in the course of his reflections, anxious and harassing as they were, and did not awaken until *cold grey light of dawn was peeping through the east oriel.*

*He started at first, rousing himself with the sense of one who awakes in a place unknown to him ; but*



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lies instantly forced themselves on his recollection. Lamp burning dimly in the socket, the wood fire not extinguished in its own white embers, the gloomy air over the chimney-piece, the sealed packet on the table—all reminded him of the events of yesterday, and deliberations of the succeeding night.

There is no help for it," he said ; "it must be civil war or anarchy. And probably the sense that his position, as head of the Executive Government, is derived entirely from popular consent, may check the too natural tendency of power to render itself arbitrary. If he is to be controlled by Parliaments, and with regard to the privileges of the subject, wherefore not Oliver as well as Charles ?

I must take measures for having this conveyed safely into the hands of this future sovereign prince. It will be well to take the first word of influence with him, since there must be many who will not hesitate to recommend measures more violent and precipitate."

He determined to intrust the important packet to the charge of Wildrake, whose rashness was never so distinguished, as when by any chance he was left idle and unemployed ; besides, even if his faith had not been otherwise unimpeachable, the obligations which he owed to his friend Everard must have rendered it such.

These conclusions passed through Colonel Everard's mind, and, as, collecting the remains of wood in the chimney, he gathered them into a hearty blaze, to remove the uncomfortable feeling of chillness which pervaded his limbs ; but by the time he was a little more warm, again sunk into a slumber, which was only dispelled by the beams of morning peeping into his apartment.

He arose, roused himself, walked up and down the room, and looked from the large oriel window on the most interesting objects, which were the untrimmed hedges and neglected walks of a certain wilderness, as it is called in the treatises on gardening, which, kept of yore

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ordered, and in all the pride of the topiary art, presented a succession of yew-trees cut into fantastic forms, of close alleys, and of open walks, filling about two or three acres of ground on that side of the Lodge, and forming a boundary between its immediate precincts and the open Park. Its enclosure was now broken down in many places, and the hinds with their fawns fed free and undisturbed up to the very windows of the silvan palace.

This had been a favourite scene of Markham's sport when a boy. He could still distinguish, though now grown out of shape, the verdant battlements of a Gothic castle, all created by the gardener's shears, at which he was accustomed to shoot his arrows ; or, stalking before it like the Knight-errants of whom he read, was wont to blow his horn, and bid defiance to the supposed giant or Paynim knight, by whom it was garrisoned. He remembered how he used to train his cousin, though several years younger than himself, to bear a part in the revels of his boyish fancy, and to play the character of an elfin page, or a fairy, or an enchanted princess. He remembered, too, many particulars of their later acquaintance, from which he had been almost necessarily led to the conclusion, that from an early period their parents had entertained some idea that there might be a well-fitted match betwixt his fair cousin and himself. A thousand visions, formed in so bright a prospect, vanished along with it, but now returned like shadows to remind him of all he had lost—and for what?—“the sake of England,” his proud consciousness repeated—“Of England, in danger of becoming the prey of bigotry and tyranny.” And he strengthened with the recollection, “If I have sacrificed my happiness, it is that my country may enjoy liberty of conscience, and personal freedom ; which, under a prince and usurping statesman, she was but to have lost.”

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But the busy fiend in his breast would not be repulsed by the bold answer. "Has thy resistance," it demanded, "availed thy country, Markham Everard? Lies not England, after so much bloodshed, and so much misery, as low beneath the sword of a fortunate soldier, as formerly under the sceptre of an encroaching prince? Are Parliament, or what remains of them, fitted to contend with a leader, master of his soldiers' hearts, as bold and subtle as he is impenetrable in his designs? This General who holds the army, and by that the fate of the nation in his hand, will he lay down his power because philosophy would pronounce it his duty to become a subject?"

He dared not answer that his knowledge of Cromwell authorised him to expect any such act of self-denial. Yet still he considered that in times of such infinite difficulty, that must be the best government, however little desirable in itself, which should most speedily restore peace to the land, and stop the wounds which the contending parties were daily inflicting on each other. He imagined that Cromwell was the only authority under which a steady government could be formed, and therefore had attached himself to his fortune, though not without considerable and recurring doubts, how far serving the views of this impenetrable and mysterious General was consistent with the principles under which he had assumed arms.

While these things passed in his mind, Everard looked upon the packet which lay on the table addressed to the Lord-General, and which he had made up before sleep. He hesitated several times, when he remembered its purport, and in what degree he must stand committed with that personage, and bound to support his plans of aggrandisement, when once that communication was in Oliver Cromwell's possession.

"Yet it must be so," he said at last, with a deep sigh

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mong the contending parties, he is the wisest and most moderate—and, ambitious, perhaps not the most dangerous. Some trusted with power to preserve and enforce, and who can possess or wield such power that is head of the victorious armies of the nation, what will in future, peace and the rest ought to be our first and most pressing business. This remnant of a parliament cannot keep the peace against the army, by mere appeal to the nation. If they design to reduce the soldier by actual warfare, and the land has been spattered in blood. But Cromwell may, and I think will, make a moderate accommodation with them, on which peace may be preserved; and it is to us to look and trust for a settlement of the business; and for the chance of protecting my countryman from the consequences of his honorable pertinacity."

silencing some internal feelings of doubt and hesitation by such reasoning as this, Markham Eve decided in his resolution to unite himself with the struggle which was evidently approaching between civil and military authorities; not as the champion of perfect liberty, he would have preferred

as the best choice between two dangers

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that it was impossible his father could see matters in another light than that in which they occurred to himself.

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### CHAP. VII.

**D**ETERMINED at length to despatch his packet to the General without delay, Colonel Everard approached the door of the apartment in which, as was evident from the heavy breathing within, the prisoner Wildrake enjoyed a deep slumber, under the influence of liquor at once and of fatigue. In turning the key, the bolt, which was rather rusty, made a resistance so noisy, as partly to attract the sleeper's attention, though not to awaken him. Everard stood by his bedside, as he heard him mutter, "Is it morning already, jailor?—Why, you dog, an you had but a cast of humanity in you, you would qualify your vile news with a cup of sack;—hanging is sorry work, my masters—and sorrow's dry."

"Up, Wildrake—up, thou ill-omened dreamer," said his friend, shaking him by the collar.

"Hands off!" answered the sleeper.—"I can climb a ladder without help, I trow."—He then sat up in the bed, and opening his eyes, stared around him, and exclaimed, "Zounds! Mark, is it only thou? I thought it was all over with me—fetters were struck from my legs—rope drawn round my gullet—irons knocked off my hands—all ready for a dance in the open element upon a slight footing."

"Truce with thy folly, Wildrake; sure the devil of drink, to whom thou hast, I think, sold thyself"——

"For a hogshead of sack," interrupted Wildrake.  
"the bargain was made in a cellar in the Vintry."  
"I am as mad as thou art, to trust anything to thee"

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said Markham ; " I scarce believe thou hast thy senses yet."

" What should ail me?" said Wildrake—" I trust I have not tasted liquor in my sleep, saving that I dreamed of drinking small-beer with Old Noll of his own brewing. But do not look so glum, man—I am the same Roger Wildrake that I ever was ; as wild as a mallard, but as true as a game-cock. I am thine own chum, man—bound to thee by thy kind deeds—*devinctus beneficio*—there is Latin for it ; and where is the thing thou wilt charge me with, that I will not, or dare not, execute, were it to pick the devil's teeth with my rapier, after he had breakfasted upon roundheads?"

" You will drive me mad," said Everard.—" When I am about to intrust all I have most valuable on earth to your management, your conduct and language are those of a mere Bedlamite. Last night I made allowance for thy drunken fury ; but who can endure thy morning madness?—it is unsafe for thyself and me, Wildrake—it is unkind—I might say ungrateful."

" Nay, do not say *that*, my friend," said the cavalier, with some show of feeling ; " and do not judge of me with a severity that cannot apply to such as I am. We who have lost our all in these sad jars, who are compelled to shift for our living, not from day to day, but from meal to meal—we whose only hiding place is the jail, whose prospect of final repose is the gallows,—what canst thou expect from us, but to bear such a lot with a light heart, since we should break down under it with a heavy one?"

This was spoken in a tone of feeling which found a responding string in Everard's bosom. He took his friend's hand, and pressed it kindly.

" Nay, if I seemed harsh to thee, Wildrake, I profess it was for thine own sake more than mine. I know thou art at the bottom of thy levity as deep a principle "

## WOODSTOCK.

honour and feeling as ever governed a human heart. But thou art thoughtless—thou art rash—and I protest to thee, that wert thou to betray thyself in this matter, in which I trust thee, the evil consequences to myself would not afflict me more than the thought of putting thee into such danger."

"Nay, if you take it on that tone, Mark," said the cavalier, making an effort to laugh, evidently that he might conceal a tendency to a different emotion, "thou wilt make children of us both—babes and sucklings, by the hilt of this bilbo.—Come, trust me; I can be cautious when time requires it—no man ever saw me drink when an alert was expected—and not one poor pint of wine will I taste until I have managed this matter for thee. Well, I am thy secretary—clerk—I had forgot—and carry thy despatches to Cromwell, taking good heed not to be surprised or choused out of my lump of loyalty [striking his finger on the packet], and I am to deliver it to the most loyal hands to which it is most humbly addressed—Adzooks, Mark, think of it a moment longer—Surely thou wilt not carry thy perverseness so far as to strike in with this bloody-minded rebel?—Bid me give him three inches of my dudgeon-dagger, and I will do it much more willingly than present him with thy packet."

"Go to," replied Everard, "this is beyond our bargain. If you will help me, it is well; if not, let me lose no time in debating with thee, since I think every moment an age till the packet is in the General's possession. It is the only way left me to obtain some protection, and a place of refuge, for my uncle and his daughter."

"That being the case," said the cavalier, "I will not spare the spur. My nag up yonder at the town will be ready for the road in a trice, and thou may'st reckon my being with Old Noll—thy General, I mean—in short time as man and horse may consume bread."

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lived on his present embassy with a strange mixture of feelings, such as perhaps he had never in his life before experienced.

His feelings as a loyalist led him to detest Cromwell, whom in other circumstances he would scarce have wished to see, except in a field of battle, where he could have had the pleasure to exchange pistol-shots with him. But with this hatred there was mixed a certain degree of fear. Always victorious wherever he fought, the remarkable person whom Wildrake was now approaching had acquired that influence over the minds of his enemies, which constant success is so apt to inspire—they dreaded while they hated him—and joined to these feelings was a restless meddling curiosity, which made a particular feature in Wildrake's character, who, having long had little business of his own, and caring nothing about that which he had, was easily attracted by the desire of seeing whatever was curious or interesting around him.

"I should like to see the old rascal after all," he said, "were it but to say that I *had* seen him."

He reached Windsor in the afternoon, and felt on his arrival the strongest inclination to take up his residence at some of his old haunts, when he had occasionally frequented that fair town in gayer days. But, resisting all temptations of this kind, he went courageously to the principal inn, from which its ancient emblem, the Garter, had long disappeared. The master, too, whom Wildrake, experienced in his knowledge of landlords and hostelries, had remembered a dashing Mine Host of Queen Bess's school, had now sobered down to the temper of the times, shook his head when he spoke of the Parliament, wielded his spigot with the gravity of a priest conducting a sacrifice, wished England a happy issue out of all her afflictions, and greatly lauded Excellency the Lord-General. Wildrake also remarked that his wine was better than it was wont to be

## WOODSTOCK.

Puritans having an excellent gift at detecting every fallacy in that matter ; and that his measures were less and his charges larger—circumstances which he was induced to attend to, by mine host talking a good deal about his conscience.

He was told by this important personage, that the Lord-General received frankly all sorts of persons ; and that he might obtain access to him next morning, at eight o'clock, for the trouble of presenting himself at the Castle-gate, and announcing himself as the bearer of despatches to his Excellency.

To the Castle the disguised cavalier repaired at the hour appointed. Admittance was freely permitted to him by the red-coated soldier, who, with austere looks, and his musket on his shoulder, mounted guard at the external gate of that noble building. Wildrake passed

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ed, as if in evidence of England's conquest over her  
ent enemy. This change of ensigns increased the  
n of his gloomy reflections, in which, although con-  
ry to his wont, he became so deeply wrapped, that  
; first thing which recalled him to himself, was the  
allenge from the sentinel; accompanied with a stroke  
the butt of his musket on the pavement, with an  
nphasis which made Wildrake start.

"Whither away, and who are you?"

"The bearer of a packet," answered Wildrake, "to  
the worshipful the Lord-General."

"Stand till I call the officer of the guard."

The corporal made his appearance, distinguished  
above those of his command by a double quantity of  
band round his neck, a double height of steeple-crowned  
hat, a larger allowance of cloak, and a treble proportion  
of sour gravity of aspect. It might be read on his  
countenance, that he was one of those resolute enthu-  
siasts to whom Oliver owed his conquests, whose reli-  
gious zeal made them even more than a match for the  
high-spirited and high-born cavaliers, that exhausted  
their valour in vain defence of their sovereign's person  
and crown. He looked with grave solemnity at Wild-  
rake, as if he was making in his own mind an inventory  
of his features and dress; and having fully perused  
them, he required "to know his business."

"My business," said Wildrake, as firmly as he could  
—for the close investigation of this man had given him  
some unpleasant nervous sensations—"my business is  
with your General."

"With his Excellency the Lord-General, thou would  
say?" replied the corporal. "Thy speech, my frier  
savours too little of the reverence due to his Ex-  
cellency."

"D—n his Excellency!" was at the lips of  
liar; but prudence kept guard, and permitt

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offensive words to escape the barrier. He only bowed, and was silent.

"Follow me," said the starched figure whom he addressed; and Wildrake followed him accordingly into the guard-house, which exhibited an interior characteristic of the times, and very different from what such military stations present at the present day.

By the fire sat two or three musketeers, listening to one who was expounding some religious mystery to them. He began half beneath his breath, but in tones of great volubility, which tones, as he approached the conclusion, became sharp and eager, as challenging either instant answer or silent acquiescence. The

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"And what besides Ephraim?"

"Ephraim Cobb, from the godly city of Gloucester, where I have dwelt for seven years, serving apprentice to a praiseworthy cordwainer."

"It is a goodly craft," answered the officer; "but casting in thy lot with ours, doubt not that thou shalt be set beyond thine awl, and thy last to boot."

A grim smile of the speaker accompanied this poor attempt at a pun; and then turning round to the corporal, who stood two paces off, with the face of one who seemed desirous of speaking, said, "How now, corporal, what tidings?"

"Here is one with a packet, an it please your Excellency," said the corporal—"Surely my spirit doth not rejoice in him, seeing I esteem him as a wolf in sheep's clothing."

By these words Wildrake learned that he was in the actual presence of the remarkable person to whom he was commissioned; and he paused to consider in what manner he ought to address him.

The figure of Oliver Cromwell was, as is generally known, in no way prepossessing. He was of middle stature, strong and coarsely made, with harsh and severe features, indicative, however, of much natural sagacity and depth of thought. His eyes were grey and piercing; his nose too large in proportion to his other features, and of a reddish hue.

His manner of speaking, when he had the purpose to make himself distinctly understood, was energetic and forcible, though neither graceful nor eloquent. No man could on such occasion put his meaning into fewer and more decisive words. But when, as it often happened, he had a mind to play the orator, for the benefit of people's ears, without enlightening their understanding, Cromwell was wont to invest his meaning, or that which seemed to be his meaning, in such a mist of words

surrounding it with so many examples  
and fortifying it with such a labyrinth of  
that though one of the most shrewd men in England,  
he was, perhaps, the most unintelligible speaker that  
ever perplexed an audience. It has been long since said  
by the historian, that a collection of the Protector's  
speeches would make, with a few exceptions, the most  
nonsensical book in the world, but he ought to have  
added, that nothing could be more nervous, concise,  
and intelligible, than what he really intended should be  
understood.

It was also remarked of Cromwell, that though born  
of a good family, but  
although he had the  
and breeding connected  
fanatic democratic ruler  
dained to practise, the  
the higher classes in  
His demeanour was so  
termed clownish, yet there  
manner a ... and energy  
racter, ... even  
and a ... itself,  
spirit ... mour  
The two ... of a low  
... there was  
... ; a

tion, and ... slike of  
strong intrinsic qualities  
in many respects not an  
mocracy of England.

His religion must always be a subject of  
and probably of doubt which he himself  
have cleared up. Unquestionably there was  
his life when he was sincerely enthusiastic, an

... to his cha-  
pose respect;  
rk and subtle  
... conciliate affection.  
itself by fits, was  
ractical character  
congenial to that  
a hatred of affect  
which, joined to  
and courage, made  
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Natural temper, slightly subject to hypochondria, was strongly agitated by the same fanaticism which influenced so many persons of the time. On the other hand, there were periods during his political career, when we certainly do him no injustice in charging him with a hypocritical affectation. We shall probably judge him, and others of the same age, most truly, if we suppose that their religious professions were partly influential in their own breast, partly assumed in compliance with their own interest. And so ingenious is the human heart in deceiving itself as well as others, that it is probable neither Cromwell himself, nor those making similar pretensions to distinguished piety, could exactly have fixed the point at which their enthusiasm terminated and their hypocrisy commenced ; or rather, it was a point not fixed in itself, but fluctuating with the state of health, of good or bad fortune, of high or low spirits, affecting the individual at the period.

Such was the celebrated person, who, turning round on Wildrake, and scanning his countenance closely, seemed so little satisfied with what he beheld, that he instinctively hitched forward his belt, so as to bring the handle of his tuck-sword within his reach. But yet, folding his arms in his cloak, as if upon second thoughts laying aside suspicion, or thinking precaution beneath him, he asked the cavalier what he was, and whence he came ?

"A poor gentleman, sir,—that is, my lord,"—answered Wildrake ; "last from Woodstock."

"And what may your tidings be, sir *gentleman* ?" said Cromwell, with an emphasis. "Truly I have seen those most willing to take upon them that title, bear themselves somewhat short of wise men, and good men, and true men, with all their gentility ; yet gentleman was a good title in old England, when men remembered what it construed to mean."

"You say truly, sir," replied Wildrake, suppressing, with difficulty, some of his usual wild expletives; "formerly gentlemen were found in gentlemen's places, but now the world is so changed that you shall find the broidered belt has changed place with the under spur-leather."

"Say'st thou me?" said the General; "I profess thou art a bold companion, that can bandy words so wantonly;—thou ring'st somewhat too loud to be good metal, methinks. And, once again, what are thy tidings with me?"

"This packet," said Wildrake, "commended to your hands by Colonel Markham Everard."

"Alas, I must have mistaken thee," answered Cromwell, mollified at the mention of a man's name whom he had great desire to make his own; "forgive us, good friend, for such, we doubt not, thou art. Sit thee down, and commune with thyself, as thou may'st, until we have examined the contents of thy packet. Let him be looked to, and have what he lacks." So saying, the General left the guard-house, where Wildrake took his seat in the corner, and awaited with patience the issue of his mission.

The soldiers now thought themselves obliged to treat him with more consideration, and offered him a pipe of Trinidado, and a black jack filled with October. But the look of Cromwell, and the dangerous situation in which he might be placed by the least chance of detection, induced Wildrake to decline these hospitable offers, and stretching back in his chair, and affecting slumber, he escaped notice or conversation, until a sort of aid-de-camp, or military officer in attendance, came to summon him to Cromwell's presence.

*By this person he was guided to a postern-gate, through which he entered the body of the Castle, and penetrating through many private passages and stair-*



**In this scene of disorder, the victorious general of the Commonwealth was seated in a large easy-chair, covered with damask, and deeply embroidered, the splendour of which made a strong contrast with the plain, and even homely character of his apparel ; although in look and action he seemed like one who felt that the seat which might have in former days held a prince, was not too much distinguished for his own fortunes and ambition. Wildrake stood before him, nor did he ask him to sit down.**

**" Pearson," said Cromwell, addressing himself to the officer in attendance, " wait in the gallery, but be within call." Pearson bowed, and was retiring. " Who are in the gallery besides ? "**

**" Worthy Mr. Gordon, the chaplain, was holding forth but now to Colonel Overton, and four captains of your Excellency's regiment."**

**" We would have it so," said the General ; " we would not there were any corner in our dwelling where the**

lay aside their swords, and

on retired ; and the General, holding the letter in his hand, looked again for a long while forlornly, as if considering in what strain he should address him.

When he did speak, it was, at first, in one of those discourses which we have already described, in which it was very difficult for any one to understand him, if, indeed, he knew it himself. We will be concise in our statement, as our desire to give you the words of a man so extraordinary will permit. "In this letter," he said, "you have brought me to know my master, or patron, Markham Everard ; a true and honourable gentleman as ever bore arms for his thigh, and one who hath ever distinguished himself in the great work of delivering these three poor nations. Answer me not : I know what you will say.—And this letter he hath sent to me by his own hand, and in his own confidence."

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What I have said, a threefold argument or division : first, as it concerneth thy master ; secondly, as it concerneth us and our office ; thirdly and lastly, as it toucheth thyself.—Now, as concerning this good and worthy gentleman, Colonel Markham Everard, truly he hath played the man from the beginning of these unhappy buffetings, not turning to the right or to the left, but holding ever in his eye the mark at which he aimed. Ay, truly, a faithful, honourable gentleman, and one who may well call me friend ; and truly I am pleased to think that he doth so. Nevertheless, in this vale of tears, we must be governed less by our private respects and partialities, than by those higher principles and points of duty, whereupon the good Colonel Markham Everard hath ever framed his purposes, as, truly, I have endeavoured to form mine, that we may all act as becometh good Englishmen and worthy patriots. Then, as for Woodstock, it is a great thing which the good Colonel asks, that it should be taken from the spoil of the godly and left in keeping of the men of Moab, and especially of the malignant, Henry Lee, whose hand hath been ever against us when he might find room to raise it ; I say, he hath asked a great thing, both in respect of himself and me. For we of this poor but godly army of England, are holden, by those of the Parliament, as men who should render in spoil for them, but be no sharer of it ourselves ; even as the buck, which the hounds pull to earth, furnisheth no part of their own food, but they are lashed off from the carcass with whips, like those which require punishment for their forwardness, not reward for their services. Yet I speak not this so much in respect of this grant of Woodstock, in regard that, perhaps, their Lordships of the Council, and also the Committeemen of this Parliament, may graciously think they have given me a portion in the matter, in relation that my kinsman Desborough hath an interest allow

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him therein ; which interest, as he hath well deserved it for his true and faithful service to these unhappy and devoted countries, so it would ill become me to diminish the same to his prejudice, unless it were upon great and public respects. Thus thou seest how it stands with me, my honest friend, and in what mind I stand touching thy master's request to me ; which yet I do not say that I can altogether or unconditionally grant or refuse, but only tell my simple thoughts with regard thereto. Thou understandest me, I doubt not ?"

Now, Roger Wildrake, with all the attention he had been able to pay to the Lord-General's speech, had got so much confused among the various clauses of the harangue, that his brain was bewildered, like that of a country clown when he chanches to get himself involved among a crowd of carriages, and cannot stir a step to get out of the way of one of them, without being in danger of being ridden over by the others.

The General saw his look of perplexity, and began a new oration, to the same purpose as before ; spoke of his love for his kind friend the Colonel—his regard for his pious and godly kinsman, Master Desborough—the great importance of the Palace and Park of Woodstock—the determination of the Parliament that it should be confiscated, and the produce brought into the coffers of the state—his own deep veneration for the authority of Parliament, and his no less deep sense of the injustice done to the army—how it was his wish and will that all matters should be settled in an amicable and friendly manner, without self-seeking, debate, or strife, betwixt those who had been the hands acting, and such as had been the heads governing, in that great national cause—*how he was willing, truly willing, to contribute to this work, by laying down, not his commission only, but his life also, if it were requested of him, or could be granted with safety to the poor soldiers, to whom, silly poc*

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men, he was bound to be as a father, seeing that they had followed him with the duty and affection of children.

And here he arrived at another dead pause, leaving Wildrake as uncertain as before, whether it was or was not his purpose to grant Colonel Everard the powers he had asked for the protection of Woodstock against the parliamentary Commissioners. Internally he began to entertain hopes that the justice of Heaven, or the effects of remorse, had confounded the regicide's understanding. But no—he could see nothing but sagacity in that steady stern eye, which, while the tongue poured forth its periphrastic language in such profusion, seemed to watch with severe accuracy the effect which his oratory produced on the listener.

"Egad," thought the cavalier to himself, becoming a little familiar with the situation in which he was placed, and rather impatient of a conversation which led to no visible conclusion or termination, "if Noll were the devil himself, as he is the devil's darling, I will not be thus nose-led by him. I'll e'en brusque it a little, if he goes on at this rate, and try if I can bring him to a more intelligible mode of speaking."

Entertaining this bold purpose, but half afraid to execute it, Wildrake lay by for an opportunity of making the attempt, while Cromwell was apparently unable to express his own meaning. He was already beginning a third panegyric upon Colonel Everard, with sundry varied expressions of his own wish to oblige him, when Wildrake took the opportunity to strike in, on the General's making one of his oratorical pauses.

"So please you," he said bluntly, "your worship has already spoken on two topics of your discourse, your own worthiness, and that of my master, Colonel Everard. But, to enable me to do mine errand, it would be necessary to bestow a few words on the third head."

"The third  
"Ay," said Wildrake,  
division of your discourse, touched  
What am I to do—what portion am I to  
matter?"

Oliver started at once fr  
hitherto used, and which  
ring of a domestic cat, into  
to spring



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of us, so far as cudgelling to some tune can perform it."

"Say'st thou?" said the General, with a grim smile on his lip, which seemed to intimate that he was not quite inaccessible to flattery; "yea, truly, thou dost not lie in that—we have been an instrument. Neither are we, as I have already hinted, so severely bent against those who have striven against us as malignants, as others may be. The parliament-men best know their own interest and their own pleasure; but, to my poor thinking, it is full time to close these jars, and to allow men of all kinds the means of doing service to their country; and we think it will be thy fault if thou art not employed to good purpose for the state and thyself, on condition thou putttest away the old man entirely from thee, and givest thy earnest attention to what I have to tell thee."

"Your lordship need not doubt my attention," said the cavalier.

And the republican General, after another pause, as one who gave his confidence not without hesitation, proceeded to explain his views with a distinctness which he seldom used, yet not without his being a little biassed now and then, by his long habits of circumlocution, which indeed he never laid entirely aside, save in the field of battle.

"Thou seest," he said, "my friend, how things stand with me. The Parliament, I care not who knows it, love me not—still less do the Council of State, by whom they manage the executive government of the kingdom. I cannot tell why they nourish suspicion against me, unless it is because I will not deliver this poor innocent army, which has followed me in so many military actions, to be now pulled asunder, broken piecemeal and reduced, so that they who have protected state at the expense of their blood, will not have

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chance, the means of feeding themselves by their labour ; which, methinks, were hard measure, since it is taking from Esau his birthright, even without giving him a poor mess of pottage."

"Esau is likely to help himself, I think," replied Wildrake.

"Truly, thou say'st wisely," replied the General ; "it is ill starving an armed man if there is food to be had for taking—nevertheless, far be it for me to encourage rebellion, or want of due subordination to these our rulers. I would only petition, in a due and becoming, a sweet and harmonious manner, that they would listen to our conditions, and consider our necessities. But, sir, looking on me, and estimating me so little as they do, you must think that it would be a provocation in me towards the Council of State, as well as the Parliament, if, simply to gratify your worthy master, I were to act contrary to their purposes, or deny currency to the commission under their authority, which is as yet the highest in the State—and long may it be so for me!—to carry on the sequestration which they intend. And would it not also be said, that I was lending myself to the malignant interest, affording this den of the blood-thirsty and lascivious tyrants of yore, to be in this our day a place of refuge to that old and inveterate Amalekite, Sir Henry Lee, to keep possession of the place in which he hath so long glorified himself? Truly it would be a perilous matter."

"Am I then to report," said Wildrake, "an it please you, that you cannot stead Colonel Everard in this matter?"

"Unconditionally, ay—but, taken conditionally, the answer may be otherwise,"—answered Cromwell. "*I thou art not able to fathom my purpose, and therefore I will partly unfold it to thee.—But take notice, should thy tongue betray my counsel, save in so carrying it to thy master, by all the blood which*"



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has been shed in these wild times, thou shalt die a thousand deaths in one."

"Do not fear me, sir," said Wildrake, whose natural boldness and carelessness of character was for the present time borne down and quelled, like that of falcons in the presence of the eagle.

"Hear me, then," said Cromwell, "and let no syllable escape thee. Knowest thou not the young Lee, whom they call Albert, a malignant like his father, and one who went up with the young Man to that last ruffe which we had with him at Worcester—May we be grateful for the victory!"

"I know there is such a young gentleman as Albert Lee," said Wildrake.

"And knowest thou not—I speak not by way of prying into the good Colonel's secrets, but only as it behoves me to know something of the matter, that I may best judge how I am to serve him—Knowest thou not that thy master, Markham Everard, is a suitor after the sister of this same malignant, a daughter of the old Keeper, called Sir Henry Lee?"

"All this I have heard," said Wildrake, "nor can I deny that I believe in it."

"Well, then, go to.—When the young man Charles Stuart fled from the field of Worcester, and was by sharp chase and pursuit compelled to separate himself from his followers, I know by sure intelligence that this Albert Lee was one of the last who remained with him, if not indeed the very last."

"It was devilish like him," said the cavalier, without sufficiently weighing his expressions, considering in what presence they were to be uttered—"And I'll uphold him with my rapier, to be a true chip of the old block!"

"Ha, swearest thou?" said the General. "Is thy reformation?"

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"I never swear, so please you," replied Wildrake, recollecting himself, "except there is some mention of malignants and cavaliers in my hearing ; and then the old habit returns, and I swear like one of Goring's troopers."

"Out upon thee," said the General ; "what can it avail thee to practise a profanity so horrible to the ears of others, and which brings no emolument to him who uses it ?"

"There are, doubtless, more profitable sins in the world than the barren and unprofitable vice of swearing," was the answer which rose to the lips of the cavalier ; but that was exchanged for a profession of regret for having given offence. The truth was, the discourse began to take a turn which rendered it more interesting than ever to Wildrake, who therefore determined not to lose the opportunity for obtaining possession of the secret that seemed to be suspended on Cromwell's lips ; and that could only be through means of keeping guard upon his own.

"What sort of a house is Woodstock?" said the General, abruptly.

"An old mansion," said Wildrake, in reply ; "and, so far as I might judge by a single night's lodgings, having abundance of backstairs, also subterranean passages, and all the communications under ground, which are common in old raven-nests of the sort."

"And places for concealing priests, unquestionably," said Cromwell. "It is seldom that such ancient houses lack secret stalls wherein to mew up these calves of Bethel."

"Your Honour's Excellency," said Wildrake, "may swear to that."

"I swear not at all," replied the General, drily. "But what think'st thou, good fellow?—I will ask thee blunt question—Where will those two Worcester fugitives  
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aves that thou wottest of be more likely to take shelter—and that they must be sheltered somewhere I well know—than in this same old palace, with all the corners and concealments whereof young Albert hath been acquainted ever since his earliest infancy? ”

“ Truly,” said Wildrake, making an effort to answer the question with seeming indifference, while the possibility of such an event, and its consequences, flashed fearfully upon his mind,—“ Truly I should be of your Honour’s opinion, but that I think the company, who, by the commission of Parliament, have occupied Woodstock, are likely to fright them thence, as a cat scares doves from a pigeon-house. The neighbourhood, with reverence, of Generals Desborough and Harrison, will suit ill with fugitives from Worcester field.”

“ I thought as much, and so, indeed, would I have it,” answered the General. “ Long may it be ere our names shall be aught but a terror to our enemies. But in this matter, if thou art an active plotter for thy master’s interest, thou might’st, I should think, work out something favourable to his present object.”

“ My brain is too poor to reach the depth of your honourable purpose,” said Wildrake.

“ Listen, then, and let it be to profit,” answered Cromwell. “ Assuredly the conquest at Worcester was a great and crowning mercy ; yet might we seem to be but small in our thankfulness for the same, did we not do what in us lies towards the ultimate improvement and final conclusion of the great work which has been thus prosperous in our hands, professing, in pure humility and singleness of heart, that we do not, in any way, deserve our instrumentality to be remembered, nay, would rather pray and entreat, that our name and fortunes were forgotten, than that the great work were in itself incomplete. Nevertheless, truly, placed as we now are, it concerns us more nearly than others,—that is

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so poor creatures should at all speak of themselves as concerned, whether more or less, which these changes which have been wrought around,—not, I say, by ourselves, or our own power, but by the destiny to which we were called, fulfilling the same with all meekness and humility,—I say it concerns us nearly that all things should be done in conformity with the great work which hath been wrought, and is yet working, in these lands. Such is my plain and simple meaning. Nevertheless, it is much to be desired that this young man, this King of Scots, as he called himself—this Charles Stuart—should not escape forth from the nation, where his arrival has wrought so much disturbance and bloodshed."

"I have no doubt," said the cavalier, looking down, "that your lordship's wisdom hath directed all things as they may best lead towards such a consummation; and I pray your pains may be paid as they deserve."

"I thank thee, friend," said Cromwell, with much humility; "doubtless we shall meet our reward, being in the hands of a good paymaster, who never passeth Saturday night. But understand me, friend—I desire no more than my own share in the good work. I would heartily do what poor kindness I can to your worthy master, and even to you in your degree—for such as I do not converse with ordinary men, that our presence may be forgotten like an every-day's occurrence. We speak to men like thee for their reward or their punishment; and I trust it will be the former which thou in thine office wilt merit at my hand."

"Your honour," said Wildrake, "speaks like one accustomed to command."

"True; men's minds are linked to those of my degree by fear and reverence," said the General; "but enough of that, desiring, as I do, no other dependency on a special person than is alike to us all upon that which

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bove us. But I would desire to cast this golden ball into your master's lap. He hath served against this Charles Stuart and his father. But he is a kinsman near to the old knight, Lee, and stands well affected towards his daughter. *Thou* also wilt keep a watch, my friend—that ruffling look of thine will procure thee the confidence of every malignant, and the prey cannot approach this cover, as though to shelter, like a coney in the rocks, but thou wilt be sensible of his presence."

"I make a shift to comprehend your Excellency," said the cavalier; "and I thank you heartily for the good opinion you have put upon me, and which, I pray, I may have some handsome opportunity of deserving, that I may show my gratitude by the event. But still, with reverence, your Excellency's scheme seems unlikely, while Woodstock remains in possession of the sequestrators. Both the old knight and his son, and far more such a fugitive as your honour hinted at, will take special care not to approach it till they are removed."

"It is for that I have been dealing with thee thus long," said the General.—"I told thee that I was something unwilling, upon slight occasion, to dispossess the sequestrators by my own proper warrant, although having, perhaps, sufficient authority in the state both to do so, and to despise the murmurs of those who blame me. In brief, I would be loath to tamper with my privileges, and make experiments between their strength, and the powers of the commission granted by others, without pressing need, or at least great prospect of advantage. So, if thy Colonel will undertake, for his love of the Republic, to find the means of preventing its worst and nearest danger, which must needs occur from the escape of this young Man, and will do his endeavour to stay him, in case his flight should lead him to Woodstock, which I hold very likely, I will give thee an order to these sequestrators, to evacuate the palace instant"

traffic where

I am well convinced  
hast been in the cavaliers' quar-

guess, resume thy drinking, ruffianly.  
manners whenever thou hast a mind, he must use  
where this Stuart hath ensconced himself. Either the  
young Lee will visit the old one in person, or he will  
write to him, or hold communication with him by letter.

At all

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I have spoken  
than is my wont—the

my confidence is like keeping a watch over  
magazine, the least and most insignificant

thee to ashes.

Tell your master what I

Markham Everard and thou must have at  
our head."

While he spoke,  
from his chair, and

"Woe to you, if  
escape me!—you

in Europe, than be  
out dream of play

thee, fellow—mo'

required it. But

required it. But

required it. But

required it. But

required it. But

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**Now** I said it—Fie, that I should have been this distemperature of passion!—begone, shall bring thee sealed orders—Yet, st something to ask."

"I would know," said Wildrake, to wh anxiety of the General gave some confide the figure of this young gallant, in case him?"

"A tall, rawboned, swarthy lad, the shot up into. Here is his picture by some time since." He turned round one which stood with its face against the wall not to be that of Charles the Second, but father.

The first motion of Cromwell indicated hastily replacing the picture, and it seemed was necessary to repress his disinclination it. But he did repress it, and placing the the wall, withdrew slowly and sternly, fiance of his own feelings, he was determined place from which to see it to advantage for Wildrake that his dangerous competitor turned an eye on him, for *his* blood also he saw the portrait of his master in the chief author of his death. Being a fierce man, he commanded his passion with grace and if, on its first violence, he had been provided with a suitable weapon, it is possible Cromwell have mounted higher in his bold ascent to power.

But this natural and sudden flash of passion which rushed through the veins of an ordinary man, Wildrake, was presently subdued, when the strong yet stifled emotion displayed a character as Cromwell. As the calm dark and bold countenance, agitated

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describable feelings, he found his own violence of spirit die away and lose itself in fear and wonder. So true it is, that as greater lights swallow up and extinguish the display of those which are less, so men of great, capacious, and overruling minds, bear aside and subdue, in their climax of passion, the more feeble wills and passions of others ; as when a river joins a brook, the fiercer torrent shoulders aside the smaller stream.

Wildrake stood a silent, inactive, and almost a terrified spectator, while Cromwell, assuming a firm sternness of eye and manner, as one who compels himself to look on what some strong internal feeling renders painful and disgusting to him, proceeded, in brief and interrupted expressions, but yet with a firm voice, to comment on the portrait of the late King. His words seemed less addressed to Wildrake, than to be the spontaneous unburdening of his own bosom, swelling under recollection of the past and anticipation of the future.

"That Flemish painter," he said—"that Antonio Vandyck—what a power he has ! Steel may mutilate, warriors may waste and destroy—still the King stands uninjured by time ; and our grandchildren, while they read his history, may look on his image, and compare the melancholy features with the woeful tale.—It was a stern necessity—it was an awful deed ! The calm pride of that eye might have ruled worlds of crouching Frenchmen, or supple Italians, or formal Spaniards ; but its glances only roused the native courage of the stern Englishman.—Lay not on poor sinful man, whose breath is in his nostrils, the blame that he falls, when Heaven never gave him strength of nerves to stand ! The weak rider is thrown by his unruly horse, and trampled to death—the strongest man, the best cavalier, springs to the empty saddle, and uses blade and spur till the fiery steed knows its master. We blame him, who, mounted aloft, rides triumphant



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mongst the people, for having succeeded, where the unskilful and feeble fell and died? Verily he hath his reward : Then, what is that piece of painted canvas to me more than others? No ; let him show to others the reproaches of that cold calm face, that proud yet complaining eye : Those who have acted on higher respects have no cause to start at painted shadows. Not wealth nor power brought me from my obscurity. The oppressed consciences, the injured liberties of England, were the banner that I followed."

He raised his voice so high, as if pleading in his own defence before some tribunal, that Pearson, the officer in attendance, looked into the apartment ; and observing his master, with his eyes kindling, his arm extended, his foot advanced, and his voice raised, like a general in the act of commanding the advance of his army, he instantly withdrew.

" It was other than selfish regards that drew me forth to action," continued Cromwell, " and I dare the world—ay, living or dead I challenge—to assert that I armed for a private cause, or as a means of enlarging my fortunes. Neither was there a trooper in the regiment who came there with less of personal evil will to yonder unhappy"—

At this moment the door of the apartment opened, and a gentlewoman entered, who, from her resemblance to the General, although her features were soft and feminine, might be immediately recognised as his daughter. She walked up to Cromwell, gently but firmly passed her arm through his, and said to him, in a persuasive tone, " Father, this is not well,—you have promised me this should not happen."

The General hung down his head, like one who was either ashamed of the passion to which he had given way, or of the influence which was exercised over him. He yielded, however, to the affectionate impulse

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left the apartment, without again turning his head  
towards the portrait which had so much affected him,  
or looking towards Wildrake, who remained fixed in  
astonishment.

CHAP. LX.

DOCTOR.—Go to, go to,—You have known what you should  
not. MACBETH.

WILDRAKE was left in the cabinet, as we have  
seen astonished and alone. It was often noised  
Cromwell, the deep and sagacious  
mild commander, he who  
ended to such  
land

marked by  
debaucheries. Some  
plain the ebullition of passion  
fested.

With wonder at what he had witnessed,

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ne anxiety on his own account. Though not the most reflecting of mortals, he had sense enough to know that it is dangerous to be a witness of the infirmities of men high in power ; and he was left so long by himself, as induced him to entertain some secret doubts whether the General might not be tempted to take means of confining or removing a witness who had seen him lowered, as it seemed, by the suggestions of his own conscience, beneath that lofty flight which, in general, he affected to sustain above the rest of the sublunary world.

In this, however, he wronged Cromwell, who was free either from an extreme degree of jealous suspicion, or from anything which approached towards bloodthirstiness. Pearson appeared, after a lapse of about an hour, and, intimating to Wildrake that he was to follow, conducted him into a distant apartment, in which he found the General seated on a low couch. His daughter was in the apartment, but remained at some distance, apparently busied with some female needlework, and scarce turned her head as Pearson and Wildrake entered.

At a sign from the Lord-General, Wildrake approached him as before. "Comrade," he said, "your old friends the cavaliers look on me as their enemy, and conduct themselves towards me as if they desired to make me such. I profess they are labouring to their own prejudice ; for I regard and have ever regarded them as honest and honourable fools, who were silly enough to run their necks into nooses and their heads against stone walls, that a man called Stuart, and no other, should be king over them. Fools ! are there no words made of letters that would sound as well as Charles Stuart, with that magic title beside them ? Why, the word *King* is like a lighted lamp, that throws the same bright gilding upon any combination of the alphabet, and you must shed your blood for a name ! But there

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thy part shall have no wrong from me. Here is an order, well warranted, to clear the Lodge at Woodstock, and abandon it to thy master's keeping, or those whom he shall appoint. He will have his uncle and pretty cousin with him, doubtless. Fare thee well—think on what I told thee. They say beauty is a loadstone to yonder long lad thou dost wot of ; but I reckon he has other stars at present to direct his course than bright eyes and fair hair. Be it as it may, thou knowest my purpose—peer out, peer out ; keep a constant and careful look-out on every ragged patch that wanders by hedge-row or lane—these are days when a beggar's cloak may cover a king's ransom. There are some broad Portugal pieces for thee—something strange to thy pouch, I ween. Once more, think on what thou hast heard, and," he added in a lower and more impressive tone of voice, "forget what thou hast seen. My service to thy master ;—and yet once again, *remember*—and *forget*."—Wildrake make his obeisance, and, returning to his inn, left Windsor with all possible speed.

It was afternoon in the same day when the cavalier rejoined his Roundhead friend, who was anxiously expecting him at the inn in Woodstock, appointed for their rendezvous.

"Where hast thou been?—what hast thou seen?—what strange uncertainty is in thy looks?—and why dost thou not answer me?"

"Because," said Wildrake, laying aside his riding-cloak and rapier, "you ask so many questions at once. A man has but one tongue to answer with, and mine is well-nigh glued to the roof of my mouth."

"Will drink unloosen it?" said the Colonel ; "though I dare say, thou hast tried that spell at every alehouse on the road. Call for what thou wouldst have, man, only be quick."

## WOODSTOCK.

"Colonel Everard," answered Wildrake, "I have not tasted so much as a cup of cold water this day."

"Then thou art out of humour for that reason," said the Colonel; "salve thy sore with brandy, if thou wilt, but leave being so fantastic and unlike to thyself, as thou showest in this silent mood."

"Colonel Everard," replied the cavalier very gravely, "I am an altered man."

"I think thou dost alter," said Everard, "every day in the year and every hour of the day. Come, good now, tell me, hast thou seen the General, and got his warrant for clearing out the sequestrators from Woodstock?"

"I have seen the devil," said Wildrake, "and have, as thou say'st, got a warrant from him."

"Give it me," said Everard, hastily catching at the packet.

"Forgive me, Mark," said Wildrake; "if thou knewest the purpose with which this deed is granted—if thou knewest—what it is not my purpose to tell thee—what manner of hopes are founded on thy accepting it, I have that opinion of thee, Mark Everard, that thou wouldst as soon take a red-hot horse-shoe from the anvil with thy bare hand, as receive into it this slip of paper."

"Come, come," said Everard, "this comes of some of your exalted ideas of loyalty, which, excellent within certain bounds, drive us mad when encouraged up to some heights. Do not think, since I must needs speak plainly with thee, that I see without sorrow the downfall of our ancient monarchy, and the substitution of another form of government in its stead; but ought my regret for the past to prevent my acquiescing and aiding in such measures as are likely to settle the future? The royal cause is ruined, hadst thou and every cavalier England sworn the contrary; ruined, not to rise

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—for many a day at least. The Parliament, so often draughted and drained of those who were courageous enough to maintain their own freedom of opinion, is now reduced to a handful of statesmen, who have lost the respect of the people from the length of time during which they have held the supreme management of affairs. They cannot stand long unless they were to reduce the army ; and the army, late servants, are now masters, and will refuse to be reduced. They know their strength, and that they may be an army subsisting on pay and free quarters throughout England as long as they will. I tell thee, Wildrake, unless we look to the only man who can rule and manage them, we may expect military law throughout the land ; and I, for mine own part, look for any preservation of our privileges that may be vouchsafed to us, only through the wisdom and forbearance of Cromwell. Now, you have my secret. You are aware that I am not doing the best I would, but the best I can. I wish—not so ardently as thou, perhaps—yet I *do* wish that the King could have been restored on good terms of composition, safe for us and for himself. And now, good Wildrake, rebel as thou thinkest me, make me no worse a rebel than an unwilling one. God knows, I never laid aside love and reverence to the King, even in drawing my sword against his ill advisers."

"Ah, plague on you," said Wildrake, "that is the very cant of it—that's what you all say. All of you fought against the King in pure love and loyalty, and not otherwise. However, I see your drift, and I own that I like it better than I expected. The army is your bear now, and old Noll is your bearward ; and you are *like a country constable, who makes interest with the bearward that he may prevent him from letting br loose.* Well, there may come a day when the sun shine on our side of the fence, and thereon shall :

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**and all the good fair-weather folks who love the stronger party, come and make common cause with us."**

Without much attending to what his friend said, Colonel Everard carefully studied the warrant of Cromwell. "It is bolder and more peremptory than I expected," he said. "The General must feel himself strong, when he opposes his own authority so directly to that of the Council of State and the Parliament."

"You will not hesitate to act upon it?" said Wildrake.

"That I certainly will not," answered Everard; "but I must wait till I have the assistance of the Mayor, who, I think, will gladly see these fellows ejected from the Lodge. I must not go altogether upon military authority, if possible." Then, stepping to the door of the apartment, he despatched a servant of the house in quest of the Chief Magistrate, desiring he should be made acquainted that Colonel Everard desired to see him with as little loss of time as possible.

"You are sure he will come, like a dog at a whistle," said Wildrake. "The word captain, or colonel, makes the fat citizen trot in these days, when one sword is worth fifty corporation charters. But there are dragoons yonder, as well as the grim-faced knave whom I frightened the other evening when I showed my face in at the window. Think'st thou the knaves will show no rough play?"

"The General's warrant will weigh more with them than a dozen acts of Parliament," said Everard.—"But it is time thou eatest, if thou hast in truth ridden from Windsor hither without baiting."

"I care not about it," said Wildrake; "I tell thee, your General gave me a breakfast, which, I think, will serve me one while, if I am ever able to digest it. By the mass, it lay so heavy on my conscience, that I carried it to church to see if I could digest it there with my sins. But not a whit."

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"To church!—to the door of the church, thou meanest," said Everard. "I know thy way—thou art ever wont to pull thy hat off reverently at the threshold ; but for crossing it, that day seldom comes."

"Well," replied Wildrake, "and if I do pull off my castor and kneel, is it not seemly to show the same respects in a church which we offer in a palace? It is a dainty matter, is it not, to see your Anabaptists, and Brownists, and the rest of you, gather to a sermon with as little ceremony as hogs to a trough? But here comes food, and now for a grace, if I can remember one."

Everard was too much interested about the fate of his uncle and his fair cousin, and the prospect of restoring them to their quiet home, under the protection of that formidable truncheon which was already regarded as the leading-staff of England, to remark, that certainly a great alteration had taken place in the manners and outward behaviour at least of his companion. His demeanour frequently evinced a sort of struggle betwixt old habits of indulgence, and some newly formed resolutions of abstinence ; and it was almost ludicrous to see how often the hand of the neophyte directed itself naturally to a large black leathern jack, which contained two double flagons of strong ale, and how often, diverted from its purpose by the better reflections of the reformed toper, it seized, instead, upon a large ewer of salubrious and pure water.

It was not difficult to see that the task of sobriety was not yet become easy, and that, if it had the recommendation of the intellectual portion of the party who had resolved upon it, the outward man yielded a reluctant and restive compliance. But honest Wildrake had been dreadfully frightened at the course proposed to him by Cromwell, and, with a feeling not peculiar to the Catholic

*religion, had formed a solemn resolution within his own mind, that, if he came off safe and with honour from his dangerous interview, he would show his sense*



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Heaven's favour, by renouncing some of the sins which most easily beset him, and especially that of intemperance, to which, like many of his wild compeers, he was too much addicted.

This resolution, or vow, was partly prudential as well as religious ; for it occurred to him as very possible, that some matters of a difficult and delicate nature might be thrown into his hands at the present emergency, during the conduct of which it would be fitting for him to act by some better oracle than that of the Bottle, celebrated by Rabelais. In full compliance with this prudent determination, he touched neither the ale nor the brandy which were placed before him, and declined peremptorily the sack with which his friend would have garnished the board. Nevertheless, just as the boy removed the trenchers and napkins, together with the large black jack which we have already mentioned, and was one or two steps on his way to the door, the sinewy arm of the cavalier, which seemed to elongate itself on purpose (as it extended far beyond the folds of the threadbare jacket), arrested the progress of the retiring Ganymede, and seizing on the black-jack, conveyed it to the lips, which were gently breathing forth the aspiration, "D—n—I mean, Heaven forgive me—we are poor creatures of clay—one modest sip must be permitted to our frailty."

So murmuring, he glued the huge flagon to his lips, and as the head was slowly and gradually inclined backwards, in proportion as the right hand elevated the bottom of the pitcher, Everard had great doubts whether the drinker and the cup were likely to part until the whole contents of the latter had been transferred to the person of the former. Roger Wildrake stinted, however, when, by a moderate computation, he had swallowed *at one draught* about a quart and a half.

He then replaced it on the salver, fetched a *lo* *breath* to refresh his lungs, bade the boy get him

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with the rest of the liquors, in a tone which inferred some dread of his constancy, and then, turning to his friend Everard, he expatiated in praise of moderation, observing, that the mouthful which he had just taken had been of more service to him than if he had remained quaffing healths at table for four hours together.

His friend made no reply, but could not help being privately of opinion that Wildrake's temperance had done as much execution on the tankard in his single draught, as some more moderate toppers might have effected if they had sat sipping for an evening. But the subject was changed by the entrance of the landlord, who came to announce to his honour Colonel Everard, that the worshipful Mayor of Woodstock, with the Rev. Master Holdenough, were come to wait upon him.

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## CHAP. X.

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*Here we have one head  
Upon two bodies—your two-headed bullock  
Is but an ass to such a prodigy.  
These two have but one meaning, thought, and counsel;  
And, when the single noddle has spoke out,  
The four legs scrape assent to 't.—OLD PLAY.*

**I**N the goodly form of the honest Mayor, there was a bustling mixture of importance and embarrassment, like the deportment of a man who was conscious that he had an important part to act, if he could but exactly discover what that part was. But both were mingled with much pleasure at seeing Everard, and he frequently repeated his welcomes and all-hails before he could be brought to attend to what that gentleman said in reply.

"Good, worthy Colonel, you are indeed a desirable sight to Woodstock at all times, being, as I may say, almost our townsman, as you have dwelt so much and so

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long at the palace. Truly, the matter begins almost to pass my wit, though I have transacted the affairs of this borough for many a long day ; and you are come to my assistance, like, like "——

" *Tanquam Deus ex machina*, as the Ethnic poet hath it," said Master Holdenough ; " although I do not often quote from such books.—Indeed, Master Markham Everard,—or worthy Colonel, as I ought rather to say—you are simply the most welcome man who has come to Woodstock since the days of old King Harry."

" I had some business with you, my good friend," said the Colonel, addressing the Mayor ; " I shall be glad if it should so happen at the same time, that I may find occasion to pleasure you or your worthy pastor."

" No question you can do so, good sir," interposed Master Holdenough ; " you have the heart, sir, and you have the hand ; and we are much in want of good counsel, and that from a man of action. I am aware, worthy Colonel, that you and your worthy father have ever borne yourselves in these turmoils like men of a truly Christian and moderate spirit, striving to pour oil into the wounds of the land, which some would rub with vitriol and pepper ; and we know you are faithful children of that church which we have reformed from its papistical and prelatical tenets."

" My good and reverend friend," said Everard, " I respect the piety and learning of many of your teachers ; but I am also for liberty of conscience to all men. I neither side with sectaries, nor do I desire to see them the object of suppression by violence."

" Sir, sir," said the Presbyterian, hastily, " all this hath a fair sound ; but I would you should think what a fine country and church we are like to have of it, amidst the errors, blasphemies, and schisms, which are daily introduced into the church and kingdom of England, that worthy Master Edwards, in his *Gangrena*, dec

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that our native country is about to become the very sink and cesspool of all schisms, heresies, blasphemies, and confusions, as the army of Hannibal was said to be the refuse of all nations—*Colluvies omnium gentium*.—Believe me, worthy Colonel, that they of the Honourable House view all this over lightly, and with the winking connivance of old Eli. These instructors, the schismatics, shoulder the orthodox ministers out of their pulpits, thrust themselves into families, and break up the peace thereof, stealing away men's hearts from the established faith."

"My good Master Holdenough," replied the Colonel, interrupting the zealous preacher, "there is ground of sorrow for all these unhappy discords; and I hold with you, that the fiery spirits of the present time have raised men's minds at once above sober-minded and sincere religion, and above decorum and common sense. But there is no help save patience. Enthusiasm is a stream that may foam off in its own time, whereas it is sure to bear down every barrier which is directly opposed to it.—But what are these schismatical proceedings to our present purpose?"

"Why, partly this, sir," said Holdenough, "although perhaps you may make less of it than I should have thought before we met.—I was myself—I, Nehemiah Holdenough [he added consequentially], was forcibly expelled from my own pulpit, even as a man should have been thrust out of his own house, by an alien, and an intruder—a wolf, who was not at the trouble even to put on sheep's clothing, but came in his native wolfish attire of buff and bandoleer, and held forth in my stead to the people, who are to me as a flock to the lawful shepherd.

*It is too true, sir—Master Mayor saw it, and strove to take such order to prevent it as man might, though, turning to the Mayor, "I think still you might have striven a little more."*

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"Good now, good Master Holdenough, do not let us go back on that question," said the Mayor. "Guy of Warwick, or Bevis of Hampton, might do something with this generation; but truly, they are too many and too strong for the Mayor of Woodstock."

"I think Master Mayor speaks very good sense," said the Colonel; "if the Independents are not allowed to preach, I fear me they will not fight;—and then if you were to have another rising of cavaliers?"

"There are worse folks may rise than cavaliers," said Holdenough.

"How, sir?" replied Colonel Everard. "Let me remind you, Master Holdenough, that is no safe language in the present state of the nation."

"I say," said the Presbyterian, "there are worse folk may rise than cavaliers; and I will prove what I say. The devil is worse than the worst cavalier that ever drank a health, or swore an oath—and the devil has arisen at Woodstock Lodge!"

"Ay, truly, hath he," said the Mayor, "bodily and visibly, in figure and form—An awful time we live in!"

"Gentlemen, I really know not how I am to understand you," said Everard.

"Why, it was even about the devil we came to speak to you," said the Mayor; "but the worthy minister is ways so hot upon the sectaries"——

"Which are the devil's brats, and nearly akin to him," said Master Holdenough. "But true it is, that the growth of these sects has brought up the Evil One even on the face of the earth, to look after his own interest, where he finds it most thriving."

Master Holdenough," said the Colonel, "if you mean figuratively, I have already told you that I have neither the means nor the skill sufficient to temper these angry heats. But if you design to say that there has been an actual apparition of the devil, I presume to

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think that you, with your doctrine and your learning, would be a fitter match for him than a soldier like me."

"True, sir ; and I have that confidence in the commission which I hold, that I would take the field against the foul fiend without a moment's delay," said Holdenough ; "but the place in which he hath of late appeared, being Woodstock, is filled with those dangerous and impious persons, of whom I have been but now complaining ; and though, confident in my own resources, I dare venture in disputation with their Great Master himself ; yet, without your protection, most worthy Colonel, I see not that I may with prudence trust myself with the tossing and goring ox Desborough, or the bloody and devouring bear Harrison, or the cold and poisonous snake Bletson—all of whom are now at the Lodge, doing license and taking spoil as they think meet ; and, as all men say, the devil has come to make a fourth with them."

"In good truth, worthy and noble sir," said the Mayor, "it is even as Master Holdenough says—our privileges are declared void, our cattle seized in the very pastures. They talk of cutting down and disparking the fair Chase, which has been so long the pleasure of so many kings, and making Woodstock of as little note as any paltry village. I assure you we heard of your arrival with joy, and wondered at your keeping yourself so close in your lodgings. We know no one save your father or you, that are like to stand the poor burgesses' friend in this extremity, since almost all the gentry around are malignants, and under sequestration. We trust, therefore, you will make strong intercession in our behalf."

"Certainly, Master Mayor," said the Colonel, who *saw himself with pleasure anticipated* ; "it was my very purpose to have interfered in this matter ; and I did but keep myself alone until I should be furnished with some authority from the Lord-General."

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"Powers from the Lord-General!" said the Mayor, thrusting the clergyman with his elbow—"Dost thou hear that?—What cock will fight that cock? We shall carry it now over their necks, and Woodstock shall be brave Woodstock still!"

"Keep thine elbow from my side, friend," said Hold-enough, annoyed by the action which the Mayor had suited to his words; "and may the Lord send that Cromwell prove not as sharp to the people of England as thy bones against my person! Yet I approve that we should use his authority to stop the course of these men's proceedings."

"Let us set out, then," said Colonel Everard; "and I trust we shall find the gentlemen reasonable and obedient."

The functionaries, laic and clerical, assented with much joy; and the Colonel required and received Wildrake's assistance in putting on his cloak and rapier, as if he had been the dependent whose part he acted. The cavalier contrived, however, while doing him these menial offices, to give his friend a shrewd pinch, in order to maintain the footing of secret equality betwixt them.

The Colonel was saluted, as they passed through the streets, by many of the anxious inhabitants, who seemed to consider his intervention as affording the only chance of saving their fine Park, and the rights of the corporation, as well as of individuals, from ruin and confiscation.

As they entered the Park, the Colonel asked his companions, "What is this you say of apparitions being seen amongst them?"

"Why, Colonel," said the clergyman, "you know yourself that Woodstock was always haunted?"

"I have lived therein many a day," said the Colonel, "and I know that I never saw the least sign of

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although idle people spoke of the house as they do of all old mansions, and gave the apartments ghosts and spectres to fill up the places of as many of the deceased great as had ever dwelt there."

"Nay, but, good Colonel," said the clergyman, "I trust you have not reached the prevailing sin of the times, and become indifferent to the testimony in favour of apparitions, which appears so conclusive to all but atheists, and advocates for witches?"

"I would not absolutely disbelieve what is so generally affirmed," said the Colonel; "but my reason leads me to doubt most of the stories which I have heard of this sort, and my own experience never went to confirm any of them."

"Ay, but trust me," said Holdenough, "there was always a demon of one or the other species about this Woodstock. Not a man or woman in the town but has heard stories of apparitions in the forest, or about the old castle. Sometimes it is a pack of hounds, that sweep along, and the whoops and holloos of the huntsmen, and the winding of horns and the galloping of horse, which is heard as if first more distant, and then close around you—and then anon it is a solitary huntsman, who asks if you can tell him which way the stag has gone. He is always dressed in green; but the fashion of his clothes is some five hundred years old. This is what we call Demon Meridianum—the noonday spectre."

"My worthy and reverend sir," said the Colonel, "I have lived at Woodstock many seasons, and have traversed the Chase at all hours. Trust me, what you hear from the villagers is the growth of their idle folly and superstition."

"Colonel," replied Holdenough, "a negative proves nothing. What signifies, craving your pardon, that you have not seen anything, be it earthly or be it of the other



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I, to detract from the evidence of a score of people have?—And besides, there is the Demon Noddy—the being that walketh by night ; he has been among these Independents and schismatics last night. ay, Colonel, you may stare ; but it is even so—they may try whether he will mend their gifts, as they profanely call them, of exposition and prayer. No, sir, I trow, to master the foul fiend there goeth some competent knowledge of theology, and an acquaintance of the humane letters, ay, and a regular clerical education and clerical calling."

"I do not in the least doubt," said the Colonel, "the efficacy of your qualifications to lay the devil ; but still I think some odd mistake has occasioned this confusion amongst them, if there has any such in reality existed. Desborough is a blockhead, to be sure ; and Harrison is fanatic enough to believe anything. But there is Bletson, on the other hand, who believes nothing.—What do you know of this matter, good Master Mayor?"

"In sooth, and it was Master Bletson who gave the first alarm," replied the magistrate ; "or, at least, the first distinct one. You see, sir, I was in bed with my wife, and no one else ; and I was as fast asleep as a man can desire to be at two hours after midnight, when, behold you, they came knocking at my bedroom door, to tell me there was an alarm in Woodstock, and that the bell of the Lodge was ringing at that dead hour of the night as hard as ever it rung when it called the court to dinner."

"Well, but the cause of this alarm?" said the Colonel.

"You shall hear, worthy Colonel, you shall hear," answered the Mayor, waving his hand with dignity ; "he was one of those persons who will not be hurried of their own pace. "So Mrs. Mayor would have

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suaded me, in her love and affection, poor wretch, that to rise at such an hour out of my own warm bed, was like to bring on my old complaint the lumbago, and that I should send the people to Alderman Dutton.—Alderman Devil, Mrs. Mayor, said I ;—I beg your reverence's pardon for using such a phrase—Do you think I am going to lie a-bed when the town is on fire, and the cavaliers up, and the devil to pay?—I beg pardon again, parson.—But here we are before the gate of the Palace ; will it not please you to enter ? ”

“ I would first hear the end of your story,” said the Colonel ; “ that is, Master Mayor, if it happens to have an end.”

“ Everything hath an end,” said the Mayor, “ and that which we call a pudding hath two.—Your worship will forgive me for being facetious. Where was I ?—Oh, I jumped out of bed, and put on my red plush breeches, with the blue nether stocks, for I always make a point of being dressed suitably to my dignity, night and day, summer or winter, Colonel Everard ; and I took the Constable along with me, in case the alarm should be raised by night-walkers or thieves, and called up worthy Master Holdenough out of his bed, in case it should turn out to be the devil. And so I thought I was provided for the worst, and so away we came ; and, by and by, the soldiers who came to the town with Master Tomkins, who had been called to arms, came marching down to Woodstock as fast as their feet would carry them ; so I gave our people the sign to let them pass us, and outmarch us, as it were, and this for a twofold reason.”

“ I will be satisfied,” interrupted the Colonel, “ with one good reason. You desired the red-coats should have the *first* of the fray ? ”

“ True, sir, very true ;—and also that they should have the *last* of it, in respect that fighting is their *esp* business. However, we came on at a slow pace

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men who are determined to do their duty without fear or favour, when suddenly we saw something white waste away up the avenue towards the town, when six of our constables and assistants fled at once, as conceiving it to be an apparition called the White Woman of Woodstock."

"Look you there, Colonel," said Master Holdenough; "I told you there were demons of more kinds than one, which haunt the ancient scenes of royal debauchery and cruelty."

"I hope you stood your own ground, Master Mayor?" said the Colonel.

"I—yes—most assuredly—that is, I did not, strictly speaking, keep my ground; but the town-clerk and I retreated—retreated, Colonel, and without confusion or dishonour, and took post behind worthy Master Holdenough, who, with the spirit of a lion, threw himself in the way of the supposed spectre, and attacked it with such a siserary of Latin as might have scared the devil himself, and thereby plainly discovered that it was no devil at all, nor white woman, neither woman of any colour, but worshipful Master Bletson, a member of the House of Commons, and one of the commissioners sent hither upon this unhappy sequestration of the Wood, Chase, and Lodge of Woodstock."

"And this was all you saw of the demon?" said the Colonel.

"Truly, yes," answered the Mayor; "and I had no wish to see more. However, we conveyed Master Bletson, as in duty bound, back to the Lodge, and he was ever maundering by the way how that he met a party of scarlet devils incarnate marching down to the Lodge; but, to my poor thinking, it must have been the Independent dragoons who had just passed us."

"And more incarnate devils I would never wish to see," said Wildrake, who could remain silent no longer.

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His voice, so suddenly heard, showed how much the Mayor's nerves were still alarmed, for he started and jumped aside with an alacrity of which no one would at first sight suppose a man of his portly dignity to have been capable. Everard imposed silence on his intrusive attendant ; and, desirous to hear the conclusion of this strange story, requested the Mayor to tell him how the matter ended, and whether they stopped the supposed spectre.

" Truly, worthy sir," said the Mayor, " Master Hold-enough was quite venturous upon confronting, as it were, the devil, and compelling him to appear under the real form of Master Joshua Bletson, member of Parliament for the borough of Littlefaith."

" In sooth, Master Mayor," said the divine, " I were strangely ignorant of my own commission and its immunities, if I were to value opposing myself to Satan or any Independent in his likeness, all of whom, in the name of Him I serve, I do defy, spit at, and tramp under my feet ; and because Master Mayor is something tedious, I will briefly inform your honour that I saw little of the Enemy that night, save what Master Bletson said in the first feeling of his terrors, and saw what we might collect from the disordered appearance of the Honourable Colonel Desborough and Major-General Harrison."

" And what plight were they in, I pray you?" demanded the Colonel.

" Why, worthy sir, every one might see with his eye that they had been engaged in a fight wherein they had not been honoured with perfect victory ; seeing General Harrison was stalking up and down the *four*, with his drawn sword in his hand, talking to *self*, his doublet unbuttoned, his points untrussed, *garters loose*, and like to throw him down as *and then trod on them*, and gaping and griv

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mad player. And yonder sat Desborough with a dry bottle of sack before him, which he had just emptied, and which, though the element in which he trusted, had not restored him sense enough to speak, or courage enough to look over his shoulder. He had a Bible in his hand, forsooth, as if it would of itself make battle against the Evil One; but I peered over his shoulder, and, alas! the good gentleman held the bottom of the page uppermost. It was as if one of your musketeers, noble and valiant sir, were to present the butt of his piece at the enemy instead of the muzzle—ha, ha, ha! it was a sight to judge of schismatics by; both in point of head, and in point of heart, in point of skill, and in point of courage.—Oh! Colonel, then was the time to see the true character of an authorised pastor of souls over those unhappy men, who leap into the fold without due and legal authority, and will, forsooth, preach, teach, and exhort, and blasphemously term the doctrine of the Church saltless porridge and dry chips!"

"I have no doubt you were ready to meet the danger, reverend sir; but I would fain know of what nature it was, and from whence it was to be apprehended?"

"Was it for me to make such inquiry?" said the clergyman, triumphantly. "Is it for a brave soldier to fumber his enemies, or inquire from what quarter they are to come? No, sir, I was there with match lighted, bullet in my mouth, and my harquebuss shouldered, to encounter as many devils as hell could pour in, were they countless as motes in the sunbeam; and although they came from all points of the compass. The Papists talk of the temptation of St. Anthony—pshaw! let them double all the myriads which the brain of a crazy Dutch painter hath invented, and you will find a poor Presbyterian divine—I will answer for one at least,—who, not in his own strength, but his Master's, will receive the assault in such sort, that far from returning against  
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as against yonder poor hound, day after day, and night after night, he will at once pack them off as with a vengeance to the uttermost parts of Assyria ! ”

“ Still,” said the Colonel, “ I pray to know whether you saw anything upon which to exercise your pious learning ? ”

“ Saw ? ” answered the divine ; “ no, truly, I saw nothing, nor did I look for anything. Thieves will not attack well-armed travellers, nor will devils or evil spirits come against one who bears in his bosom the word of truth in the very language in which it was first dictated. No, sir ; they shun a divine who can understand the holy text, as a crow is said to keep wide of a gun loaded with hailshot.”

They had walked a little way back upon their road to give time for this conversation ; and the Colonel, perceiving it was about to lead to no satisfactory explanation of the real cause of alarm on the preceding night, turned round, and, observing it was time they should go to the Lodge, began to move in that direction with his three companions.

It had now become dark, and the towers of Woodstock arose high above the umbrageous shroud which the forest spread around the ancient and venerable mansion. From one of the highest turrets, which could still be distinguished as it rose against the clear sky, there gleamed a light like that of a candle within the building. The Mayor stopped short, and caught fast hold of the divine, and then of Colonel Everard exclaimed, in a trembling and hasty, but suppressed tone,

“ Do you see yonder light ? ”

“ Ay, marry do I,” said Colonel Everard ; *what does that matter ?—a light in a garret-room such an old mansion as Woodstock is no subject of wonder, I trow.* ”

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at a light from Rosamond's Tower is surely so," the Mayor.

True," said the Colonel, something surprised, when, after a careful examination, he satisfied himself that the worthy magistrate's conjecture was right. "That is indeed Rosamond's Tower; and as the drawbridge by which it was accessible has been destroyed for centuries, it is hard to say what chance could have lighted a lamp in such an inaccessible place."

"That light burns with no earthly fuel," said the Mayor; "neither from whale nor olive oil, nor bees-wax, nor mutton-suet either. I dealt in these commodities, Colonel, before I went into my present line; and I can assure you I could distinguish the sort of light they give, one from another, at a greater distance than yonder turret—Look you, that is no earthly flame.—See you not something blue and reddish upon the edges?—that bodes full well where it comes from.—Colonel, in my opinion we had better go back to sup at the town, and leave the devil and the red coats to settle their matters together for to-night; and then, when we come back the next morning, we will have a pull with the party that chances to keep afield."

"You will do as you please, Master Mayor," said Everard, "but my duty requires me that I should see the Commissioners to-night."

"And mine requires me to see the Foul Fiend," said Master Holdenough, "if he dare make himself visible to me. I wonder not that, knowing who is approaching, he betakes himself to the very citadel, the inner and the last defences of this ancient and haunted mansion. He is dainty, I warrant you, and must dwell where is a relish of luxury and murder about the walls of his chamber. In yonder turret sinned Rosamond, and in yonder turret she suffered; and there she sits, or more likely, Enemy in her shape, as I have heard true men of W

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stock tell. I wait on you, good Colonel—Master Mayor will do as he pleases. The strong man hath fortified himself in his dwelling-house, but, lo, there cometh another stronger than he."

"For me," said the Mayor, "who am as unlearned as I am unwarlike, I will not engage either with the Powers of the Earth, or the Prince of the Powers of the Air, and I would we were again at Woodstock!—and hark ye, good fellow," slapping Wildrake on the shoulder, "I will bestow on thee a shilling wet and a shilling dry if thou wilt go back with me."

"Gadzookers, Master Mayor," said Wildrake, neither flattered by the magistrate's familiarity of address, nor captivated by his munificence—"I wonder who the devil made you and me fellows? and, besides, do you think I would go back to Woodstock with your worshipful cod's-head, when, by good management, I may get a peep of fair Rosamond, and see whether she was that choice and incomparable piece of ware, which the world has been told of by rhymers and ballad makers?"

"Speak less lightly and wantonly, friend," said the divine; "we are to resist the devil that he may flee from us, and not to tamper with him, or enter into his counsels, or traffic with the merchandise of his great Vanity Fair."

"Mind what the good man says, Wildrake," said the Colonel; "and take heed another time how thou dost suffer thy wit to outrun discretion."

"I am beholden to the reverend gentleman for his advice," answered Wildrake, upon whose tongue it was difficult to impose any curb whatever, even when his own safety rendered it most desirable. "But, gadzookers *let him have had what experience he will in fighting the devil, he never saw one so black as I had a with—not a hundred years ago.*"

"How, friend," said the clergyman, who unde



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everything literally when apparitions were mentioned, "have you had so late a visitation of Satan? Believe me, then, that I wonder why thou darest to entertain his name so often and so lightly, as I see thou dost use it in thy ordinary discourse. But when and where didst thou see the Evil One?"

Everard hastily interposed, lest by something yet more strongly alluding to Cromwell, his imprudent squire should, in mere wantonness, betray his interview with the General. "The young man raves," he said, "of a dream which he had the other night, when he and I slept together in Victor Lee's chamber, belonging to the Ranger's apartments at the Lodge."

"Thanks for help at a pinch, good patron," said Wildrake, whispering into Everard's ear, who in vain endeavoured to shake him off—"a fib never failed a fanatic."

"You also spoke something too lightly of these matters, considering the work which we have in hand, worthy Colonel," said the Presbyterian divine. "Believe me, the young man thy servant was more likely to see visions than to dream merely idle dreams in that apartment; for I have always heard, that, next to Rosamond's Tower, in which, as I said, she played the wanton, and was afterwards poisoned by Queen Eleanor, Victor Lee's chamber was the place in the Lodge of Woodstock more peculiarly the haunt of evil spirits.—I pray you, young man, tell me this dream or vision of yours."

"With all my heart, sir," said Wildrake—then addressing his patron, who began to interfere, he said, "Tush, sir, you have had the discourse for an hour, and why should not I hold forth in my turn? By this darkness, if you keep me silent any longer, I will turn Independent preacher, and stand up in your despite for the freedom of private judgment.—And so, reverend sir, was dreaming of a carnal divertisement called a

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baiting ; and methought they were venturing dogs at head, as merrily as e'er I saw them at Tutbury bull-running ; and methought I heard some one say, there was the devil come to have a sight of the bull-ring. Well, I thought that, gadswoons, I would have a peep at his Infernal Majesty. So I looked, and there was a butcher in greasy woollen, with his steel by his side ; but he was none of the devil. And there was a drunken cavalier, with his mouth full of oaths, and his stomach full of emptiness, and a gold-laced waistcoat in a very dilapidated condition, and a ragged hat, with a piece of a feather in it ; and he was none of the devil neither. And there was a miller, his hands dusty with meal, and every atom of it stolen ; and there was a vintner, his green apron stained with wine, and every drop of it sophisticated ; but neither was the old gentleman I looked for to be detected among these artisans of iniquity. At length, Sir, I saw a grave person with cropped hair, a pair of longish and projecting ears, a band as broad as a slobbering bib under his chin, a brown coat surmounted by a Geneva cloak, and I had old Nicholas at once in his genuine paraphernalia, by——"

"Shame, shame !" said Colonel Everard. "What ! behave thus to an old gentleman and a divine !"

"Nay, let him proceed," said the minister, with perfect equanimity ; "if thy friend, or secretary, is gibing, I must have less patience than becomes my profession, if I could not bear an idle jest, and forgive him who makes it. Or if, on the other hand, the Enemy has really presented himself to the young man in such a guise as he intimates, wherefore should we be surprised *that he who can take upon him the form of an angel of light, should be able to assume that of a frail and peccable mortal, whose spiritual calling and profess* *ought, indeed, to induce him to make his life*

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example to others ; but whose conduct, nevertheless, such is the imperfection of our unassisted nature, sometimes rather presents us with a warning of what we should shun ! ”

“ Now, by the mass, honest dominie—I mean reverend sir—I crave you a thousand pardons,” said Wildrake, penetrated by the quietness and patience of the presbyter’s rebuke. “ By St. George, if quiet patience will do it, thou art fit to play a game at foils with the devil himself, and I would be contented to hold stakes.”

As he concluded an apology, which was certainly not uncalled for, and seemed to be received in perfectly good part, they approached so close to the exterior door of the Lodge, that they were challenged with the emphatic *Stand*, by the sentinel who mounted guard there. Colonel Everard replied, *A friend*; and the sentinel, repeating his command, “ Stand, friend,” proceeded to call the corporal of the guard. The corporal came forth, and at the same time turned out his guard. Colonel Everard gave his name and designation, as well as those of his companions, on which the corporal said, “ He doubted not there would be orders for his instant admission ; but, in the first place, Master Tomkins must be consulted, that he might learn their honours’ mind.”

“ How, sir ! ” said the Colonel, “ do you, knowing who I am, presume to keep me on the outside of your post ? ”

“ Not if your honour pleases to enter,” said the corporal, “ and undertakes to be my warranty ; but such are the orders of my post.”

“ Nay, then, do your duty,” said the Colonel ; “ but are the cavaliers up, or what is the matter, that you keep so close and strict a watch ? ”

The fellow gave no distinct answer, but mo-

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between his moustaches something about the roaring Lion, who goeth about seeking to devour. Presently afterwards Tomkins followed by two servants bearing lights in shining brass candlesticks. They marched before Everard and his party, keeping as close as two cloves of the same orange, and starting to time; and shouldering as they passed through the intricate passages, they led up a large and a staircase, the bannisters, rail, and lining executed in black oak, and finally into a large parlour, where there was a prodigious fire of twelve candles of the largest size distributed against the wall. There were seated the Counts who now held in their power the ancient royal domain of Woodstock.

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## CHAP. XI.

*The bloody bear, an independent beast,  
Unlick'd to forms, in groans his hate expresses.*

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*Next him the buffoon ape, as atheists use,  
Mimick'd all sects, and had his own to choose.*

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**T**HE strong light in the parlour which was described served to enable Everard to recognise his acquaintances, Desbross, and Bletson, who had assembled round a table of large dimensions, placed near the chimney, on which were arranged wine and materials for smoking, then the general conversation of the time. There was a species of moveable set betwixt the table and the door, calculated for a display of plate upon grand occasions.

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ent only used as a screen ; which purpose it served affectually, that, ere he had coasted around it, Everard and the following fragment of what Desborough was saying, in his strong coarse voice :—"Sent him to share with us, I'se warrant ye—It was always his Excellency's brother-in-law's way—if he made a treat for five friends, he would invite more than the table could hold—I have known him ask three men to eat two eggs."

"Hush, hush," said Bletson ; and the servants, making their appearance from behind the tall cupboard, announced Colonel Everard. It may not be uninteresting to the reader to have a description of the party into which he now entered.

Desborough was a stout, bull-necked man, of middle-size, with heavy vulgar features, grizzled bushy eyebrows, and wall-eyes. The flourish of his powerful relative's fortunes had burst forth in the finery of his dress, which was much more ornamented than was usual among the Roundheads. There was embroidery on his cloak, and lace upon his band ; his hat displayed a feather with a golden clasp, and all his habiliments were those of a cavalier, or follower of the court, rather than the plain dress of a parliamentary officer. But, Heaven knows, there was little of courtlike grace or dignity in the person or demeanour of the individual, who became his fine suit as the hog on the sign-post does his gilded armour. It was not that he was positively deformed or misshaped, for, taken in detail, the figure was well enough. But his limbs seemed to act upon different and contradictory principles. They were not, as the play says, in a concatenation accordingly ;—the right hand moved as if it were upon bad terms with the left, and the legs showed an inclination to foot it in different and opposite directions. In short, to use an extravagant comparison, the members of Colonel Desborough seemed rather to resemble the dispo-

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representatives of a federative congress, than the well-ordered union of the orders of the state, in a firm and well-compacted monarchy, where each holds his own place, and all obey the dictates of a common head.

General Harrison, the second of the Commissioners, was a tall, thin, middle-aged man, who had risen into his high situation in the army, and his intimacy with Cromwell, by his dauntless courage in the field, and the popularity he had acquired by his exalted enthusiasm amongst the military saints, sectaries, and Independents, who composed the strength of the existing army. Harrison was of mean extraction, and bred up to his father's employment of a butcher. Nevertheless, his appearance, though coarse, was not vulgar, like that of Desborough, who had so much the advantage of him in birth and education. He had a masculine height and strength of figure, was well made, and in his manner announced a rough military character, which might be feared, but could not easily become the object of contempt or ridicule. His aquiline nose and dark black eyes set off to some advantage a countenance otherwise irregular, and the wild enthusiasm that sometimes sparkled in them as he dilated on his opinions to others, and often seemed to slumber under his long dark eyelashes as he mused upon them himself, gave something strikingly wild, and even noble, to his aspect. He was one of the chief leaders of those who were called Fifth-Monarchy men, who, going even beyond the general fanaticism of the age, presumptuously interpreted the Book of the Revelations after their own fancies, considered that the second Advent of the Messiah, and the Millennium, or reign of the Saints upon earth, was *close at hand*, and that they themselves, illuminated, *as they believed*, with the power of foreseeing these approaching events, were the chosen instruments for the establishment of the New Reign, or Fifth Monarchy.

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as it was called, and were fated also to win its honours, whether celestial or terrestrial.

When this spirit of enthusiasm, which operated like a partial insanity, was not immediately affecting Harrison's mind, he was a shrewd worldly man, and a good soldier ; one who missed no opportunity of mending his fortune, and who, in expecting the exaltation of the Fifth Monarchy, was, in the meanwhile, a ready instrument for the establishment of the Lord-General's supremacy. Whether it was owing to his early occupation, and habits of indifference to pain or bloodshed acquired in the shambles, to natural disposition and want of feeling, or, finally, to the awakened character, of his enthusiasm, which made him took upon those who opposed him as opposing the Divine will, and therefore meriting no favour nor mercy, is not easy to say ; but all agreed, that after a victory, or the successful storm of a town, Harrison was one of the most cruel and pitiless men in Cromwell's army ; always urging some misapplied text to authorise the continued execution of the fugitives, and sometimes even putting to death those who had surrendered themselves prisoners. It was said, that at times the recollection of some of these cruelties troubled his conscience, and disturbed the dreams of beatification in which his imagination indulged.

When Everard entered the apartment, this true representative of the fanatical soldiers of the day, who filled those ranks and regiments which Cromwell had politically kept on foot, while he procured the reduction of those in which the Presbyterian interest predominated, was seated a little apart from the others, his legs crossed, and stretched out at length towards the fire, his head resting on his elbow, and turned upwards, as if studying, with the most profound gravity, the half-seen carvings of the Gothic roof.

Bletson remains to be mentioned, who, in person

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figure, was diametrically different from the other two. There was neither foppery nor slovenliness in his exterior, nor had he any marks of military service or rank about his person. A small walking rapier seemed merely worn as a badge of his rank as a gentleman, without his hand having the least purpose of becoming acquainted with the hilt, or his eye with the blade. His countenance was thin and acute, marked with lines which thought rather than age had traced upon it ; and a habitual sneer on his countenance, even when he least wished to express contempt on his features, seemed to assure the individual addressed, that in Bletson he conversed with a person of intellect far superior to his own. This was a triumph of intellect only, however ; for on all occasions of difference respecting speculative opinions, and indeed on all controversies whatsoever, Bletson avoided the ultimate *ratio* of blows and knocks.

Yet this peaceful gentleman had found himself obliged to serve personally in the Parliamentary army at the commencement of the Civil War, till happening unluckily to come in contact with the fiery Prince Rupert, his retreat was judged so precipitate, that it required all the shelter his friends could afford, to keep him free of an impeachment or a court-martial. But as Bletson spoke well, and with great effect, in the House of Commons, which was his natural sphere, and was on that account high in the estimation of his party, his behaviour at Edgehill was passed over, and he continued to take an active share in all the political events of that bustling period, though he faced not again the actual front of war.

Bletson's theoretical politics had long inclined him to *espouse the opinions* of Harrington and others, who *adopted the visionary idea* of establishing a pure democratical republic in so extensive a country as Britain. *This was a rash theory, where there is such an infinite*



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nce betwixt ranks, habits, education, and morals—  
e there is such an immense disproportion betwixt  
wealth of individuals—and where a large portion of  
inhabitants consists of the inferior classes of the large  
owns and manufacturing districts—men unfitted to bear  
hat share in the direction of a state, which must be exer-  
cised by the members of a republic in the proper sense of  
the word. Accordingly, as soon as the experiment was  
made, it became obvious that no such form of govern-  
ment could be adopted with the smallest chance of  
stability ; and the question came only to be, whether the  
remnant, or, as it was vulgarly called, the Rump of the  
Long Parliament, now reduced by the seclusion of so  
many of the members to a few scores of persons, should  
continue, in spite of their unpopularity, to rule the affairs  
of Britain? Whether they should cast all loose by dis-  
solving themselves, and issuing writs to convoke a new  
Parliament, the composition of which no one could answer  
for, any more than for the measures they might take  
when assembled? Or lastly, Whether Cromwell, as  
actually happened, was not to throw the sword into the  
balance, and boldly possess himself of that power which  
the remnant of the Parliament were unable to hold, and  
yet afraid to resign ?

Such being the state of parties, the Council of State, in  
distributing the good things in their gift, endeavoured to  
soothe and gratify the army, as a beggar flings crusts to  
a growling mastiff. In this view Desborough had been  
created a Commissioner in the Woodstock matter to  
gratify Cromwell, Harrison to soothe the fierce Fifth-  
Monarchy men, and Bletson as a sincere republican, and  
one of their own leaven.

But if they supposed Bletson had the least intention of  
*becoming a martyr to his republicanism, or submitting to*  
*any serious loss on account of it, they much mistook the*  
*man. He entertained their principles sincerely, and*



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the less that they were found impracticable ; for the miscarriage of his experiment no more converts the political speculator, than the explosion of a retort undeceives an alchymist. But Bletson was quite prepared to submit to Cromwell, or any one else who might be possessed of the actual authority. He was a ready subject in practice to the powers existing, and made little difference betwixt various kinds of government, holding in theory all to be nearly equal in imperfection, so soon as they diverged from the model of Harrington's Oceana. Cromwell had already been tampering with him, like wax between his finger and thumb, and which he was ready shortly to seal with, smiling at the same time to himself when he beheld the Council of State giving rewards to Bletson, as their faithful adherent, while he himself was secure of his allegiance, how soon soever the expected change of government should take place.

But Bletson was still more attached to his metaphysical than his political creed, and carried his doctrines of the perfectibility of mankind as far as he did those respecting the conceivable perfection of a model of government ; and as in the one case he declared against all power which did not emanate from the people themselves, so, in his moral speculations, he was unwilling to refer any of the phenomena of nature to a final cause. When pushed, indeed, very hard, Bletson was compelled to mutter some inarticulate and unintelligible doctrines concerning an *Animus Mundi*, or Creative Power in the works of Nature, by which she originally called into existence, and still continues to preserve, her works. To this power, he said, some of the purest metaphysicians rendered a certain degree of homage ; nor was he himself inclined absolutely to censure those, who, by the institution of holidays, choral dances, songs, and harmless feasts and libations, might be disposed to celebrate the great goddess Nature ; at least, dancing, singing, feasting, and sports

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sing, being comfortable things to both young and old, they might as well sport, dance, and feast, in honour of such appointed holidays, as under any other pretext. But then this moderate show of religion was to be practised under such exceptions as are admitted by the Highgate oath ; and no one was to be compelled to dance, drink, sing, or feast, whose taste did not happen to incline them to such divertisements ; nor was any one to be obliged to worship the creative power, whether under the name of the *Animus Mundi*, or any other whatsoever. The interference of the Deity in the affairs of mankind he entirely disowned, having proved to his own satisfaction that the idea originated entirely in priestcraft. In short, with the shadowy metaphysical exception aforesaid, Mr. Joshua Bletson of Darlington, member for Littlefaith, came as near the predicament of an atheist, as it is perhaps possible for a man to do. But we say this with the necessary salvo ; for we have known many like Bletson, whose curtains have been shrewdly shaken by superstition, though their fears were unsanctioned by any religious faith. The devils, we are assured, believe and tremble ; but on earth there are many, who, in worse plight than even the natural children of perdition, tremble without believing, and fear even while they blaspheme.

It follows, of course, that nothing could be treated with more scorn by Mr. Bletson, than the debates about Prelacy and Presbytery, about Presbytery and Independency, about Quakers and Anabaptists, Muggletonians and Brownists, and all the various sects with which the Civil War had commenced, and by which its dissensions were still continued. " It was," he said, " as if beasts of burden should quarrel amongst themselves about the fashion of their halters and pack-saddles, instead of embracing a favourable opportunity of throwing them aside. Other witty and pithy remarks he used to make w

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time and place suited ; for instance, at the club called the Rota, frequented by St. John, and established by Harrington, for the free discussion of political and religious subjects.

But when Bletson was out of this academy, or stronghold of philosophy, he was very cautious how he carried his contempt of the general prejudice in favour of religion and Christianity further than an implied objection or a sneer. If he had an opportunity of talking in private with an ingenuous and intelligent youth, he sometimes attempted to make a proselyte, and showed much address in bribing the vanity of inexperience, by suggesting that a mind like his ought to spurn the prejudices impressed upon it in childhood ; and when assuming the *latus clavus* of reason, assuring him that such as he, laying aside the *bullæ* of juvenile incapacity, as Bletson called it, should proceed to examine and decide for himself. It frequently happened, that the youth was induced to adopt the doctrines in whole, or in part, of the sage who had seen his natural genius, and who had urged him to exert it in examining, detecting, and declaring for himself ; and thus flattery gave proselytes to infidelity, which could not have been gained by all the powerful eloquence or artful sophistry of the infidel.

These attempts to extend the influence of what was called free-thinking and philosophy, were carried on, as we have hinted, with a caution dictated by the timidity of the philosopher's disposition. He was conscious his doctrines were suspected, and his proceedings watched, by the two principal sects of Prelatists and Presbyterians, who, however inimical to each other, were still more hostile to one who was an opponent, not only to a church establishment of any kind, but to every denomination of Christianity. He found it more easy to shroud himself among the Independents, whose demands were for a general liberty of conscience, or an unlimited toleration.

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and whose faith, differing in all respects and was by some pushed into such wild errors, totally beyond the bounds of every species of C and approach very near to infidelity itself, as each kind are said to approach each other mixed a good deal among those sectaries ; and his confidence in his own logic and address, supposed to have entertained hopes of bring opinions in time the enthusiastic Vane, as well less enthusiastic Harrison, provided he could them to resign their visions of a Fifth Mon induce them to be contented with a reign of Ph in England for the natural period of their lives of the reign of the Saints during the Millennium

Such was the singular group into which Evelyn now introduced ; showing, in their various opinions how many devious coasts human nature may wreck, when she has once let go her hold on that which religion has given her to lean upon ; self-conceit and worldly learning of Bletson and ignorant conclusions of the fierce and Harrison, leading them into the opposite extremes of enthusiasm and infidelity, while Desborough, tionally stupid, thought nothing about religion and while the others were active in making separate but equally erroneous courses, he might perish like a vessel, which springs a leak and found the roadstead. It was wonderful to behold what variety of mistakes and errors, on the part of him and his Ministers, on the part of the Parliament their leaders, on the part of the allied kingdoms of Scotland and England towards each other, had contributed to rear up men of such dangerous opinions and characters among the arbiters of the destiny

*Those who argue for party's sake, will serve on the one side, without deigning to look*

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other ; those who study history for instruction, will perceive that nothing but the want of concession on either side, and the deadly height to which the animosity of the King's and Parliament's parties had arisen, could have so totally overthrown the well-poised balance of the English constitution. But we hasten to quit political reflections, the rather that ours, we believe, will please neither Whig nor Tory.

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## CHAP. XII.

*Three form a College—an you give us four,  
Let him bring his share with him.*

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

**M**R. BLETSON arose and paid his respects to Colonel Everard, with the ease and courtesy of a gentleman of the time ; though on every account grieved at his intrusion, as a religious man who held his free-thinking principles in detestation, and would effectually prevent his conversion of Harrison, and even of Desborough, if anything could be moulded out of such a clod, to the worship of the *Animus Mundi*. Moreover, Bletson knew Everard to be a man of steady probity, and by no means disposed to close with a scheme on which he had successfully sounded the other two, and which was calculated to assure the Commissioners of some little private indemnification for the trouble they were to give themselves in the public business. The philosopher was yet less pleased, when he saw the magistrate and the pastor who had met him in his flight of the preceding evening, when he had been seen, *parma non bene relictæ*, with cloak and doublet left behind him.

The presence of Colonel Everard was as displeasing to Desborough as to Bletson ; but the former having no

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Joseph in him, nor an idea that it was possible for any man to resist helping himself out of untold money, was chiefly embarrassed by the thought, that the plunder which they might be able to achieve out of their trust, might, by this unwelcome addition to their number, be divided into four parts instead of three ; and this reflection added to the natural awkwardness with which he grumbled forth a sort of welcome, addressed to Everard.

As for Harrison, he remained like one on higher thoughts intent ; his posture unmoved, his eyes fixed on the ceiling as before, and in no way indicating the least consciousness that the company had been more than doubled around him.

Meantime, Everard took his place at the table, as a man who assumed his own right, and pointed to his companions to sit down nearer the foot of the board. Wildrake so far misunderstood his signals, as to sit down above the Mayor ; but, rallying his recollection at a look from his patron, he rose and took his place lower, whistling, however, as he went, a sound at which the company stared, as at a freedom highly unbecoming. To complete his indecorum, he seized upon a pipe, and filling it from a large tobacco-box, was soon immersed in a cloud of his own raising ; from which a hand shortly after emerged, seized on the black-jack of ale, withdrew it within the vapoury sanctuary, and, after a potential draught, replaced it upon the table, its owner beginning to renew the cloud which his intermitted exercise of the tube had almost allowed to subside.

Nobody made any observation on his conduct, out of respect, probably, to Colonel Everard, who bit his lip, but continued silent ; aware that censure might extract some escapade more unequivocally characteristic of a cavalier, from his refractory companion. As silence seemed awkward, and the others made no advances to break it, beyond the ordinary salutation, Colonel Everard



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at length said, "I presume, gentlemen, that you are somewhat surprised at my arrival here, and thus intruding myself into your meeting?"

"Why the dickens should we be surprised, Colonel?" said Desborough; "we know his Excellency, my brother-in-law Noll's—I mean my Lord Cromwell's way, of overquartering his men in the towns he marches through. Thou hast obtained a share in our commission?"

"And in that," said Bletson, smiling and bowing, "the Lord-General has given us the most acceptable colleague that could have been added to our number. No doubt your authority for joining with us must be under warrant of the Council of State?"

"Of that, gentlemen," said the Colonel, "I will presently advise you."—He took out his warrant accordingly, and was about to communicate the contents; but observing that there were three or four half-empty flasks upon the table, that Desborough looked more stupid than usual, and that the philosopher's eyes were reeling in his head, notwithstanding the temperance of Bletson's usual habits, he concluded that they had been fortifying themselves against the horrors of the haunted mansion, by laying in a store of what is called Dutch courage, and therefore prudently resolved to postpone his more important business with them till the cooler hour of morning. He, therefore, instead of presenting the General's warrant superseding their commission, contented himself with replying,—“My business has, of course, some reference to your proceedings here. But here is—excuse my curiosity—a reverend gentleman,” *pointing to Holdenough*, “who has told me that you are so strangely embarrassed here, as to require both the civil and spiritual authority to enable you to ke possession of Woodstock.”

“Before we go into that matter,” said Bletson, blu

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ing up to the eyes at the recollection of his own fears, so manifestly displayed, yet so inconsistent with his principles, "I should like to know who this other stranger is, who has come with the worthy magistrate, and the no less worthy Presbyterian?"

"Meaning me?" said Wildrake, laying his pipe aside; "Gadzooks, the time hath been that I could have answered the question with a better title; but at present I am only his honour's poor clerk, or secretary, whichever is the current phrase."

"'Fore George, my lively blade, thou art a frank fellow of thy tattle," said Desborough. "There is my secretary Tomkins, whom men sillily enough call Fibbet, and the Honourable Lieutenant-General Harrison's secretary Bibbet, who are now at supper below stairs, that durst not for their ears speak a phrase above their breath in the presence of their betters, unless to answer a question."

"Yes, Colonel Everard," said the philosopher, with his quiet smile, glad, apparently, to divert the conversation from the topic of last night's alarm, and recollections which humbled his self-love and self-satisfaction,— "yes; and when Master Fibbet and Master Bibbet *do* speak, their affirmations are as much in a common mould of mutual attestation, as their names would accord in the verses of a poet. If Master Fibbet happens to tell a fiction, Master Bibbet swears it as truth. If Master Bibbet chances to have gotten drunk in the fear of the Lord, Master Fibbet swears he is sober. I have called my own secretary Gibbet, though his name chances to be only Gibeon, a worthy Israelite at your service, but as pure a youth as ever picked a lamb-bone at Paschal. But I call him Gibbet, merely to make up the holy trefail with another rhyme. This squire of thine, Colonel Everard, looks as if he might be worthy to be coupled with the rest of the fraternity."

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"Not I, truly," said the cavalier; "I'll be coupled with no Jew that was ever whelped, and no Jewess neither."

"Scorn not for that, young man," said the philosopher; "the Jews are, in point of religion, the elder brethren, you know."

"The Jews older than the Christians?" said Desborough, "'fore George, they will have thee before the General Assembly, Bletson, if thou venturdest to say so."

Wildrake laughed without ceremony at the gross ignorance of Desborough, and was joined by a sniggling response from behind the cupboard, which, when inquired into, proved to be produced by the serving men. These worthies, timorous as their betters, when they were supposed to have left the room had only withdrawn to their present place of concealment.

"How now, ye rogues," said Bletson, angrily; "do you not know your duty better?"

"We beg your worthy honour's pardon," said one of the men, "but we dared not go down stairs without a light."

"A light, ye cowardly poltroons?" said the philosopher; "what—to show which of you looks palest when a rat squeaks?—but take a candlestick and be-gone, you cowardly villains! the devils you are so much afraid of must be but paltry kites, if they hawk at such bats as you are."

The servants, without replying, took up one of the candlesticks, and prepared to retreat, Trusty Tomkins at the head of the troop, when suddenly, as they arrived at the door of the parlour, which had been left half open, it was shut violently. The three terrified domestics tumbled back into the middle of the room, as if a shot had been *discharged in their face, and all who were at the table started to their feet.*

Colonel Everard was incapable of a moment's fear, *even if anything frightful had been seen; but he re*

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remained stationary, to see what his companion and to get at the bottom, if possible, of their alarm upon an occasion so trifling. The seemed to think that *he* was the person chiefly to show manhood on the occasion.

He walked to the door accordingly, murmuring at the cowardice of the servants ; but at such a rate that it seemed he would most willingly have been repudiated by any one whom his reproaches had exerted. "Cowardly blockheads !" he said, seizing hold of the handle of the door, but waving it effectually round—"dare you not open—(still fumbling with the lock)—"dare you not go up a staircase without a light ? Here, bring me a light, you cowardly villains !—By Heaven, something on the outside !"

As he spoke, he let go the handle of the door and stepped back a pace or two into the apartment, his cheeks as pale as the band he wore.

"*Deus adjutor meus !*" said the Presbyterian man, rising from his seat. "Give place, sir, to Bletson ; 'it would seem I know more of this than thou, and I bless Heaven I am armed for the occasion.'"

Bold as a grenadier about to mount a bayonet with the same belief in the existence of a God to be encountered, as well as the same religious goodness of his cause, the worthy man stepped to the philosophical Bletson, and taking a lighted scion in one hand, quietly opened the door. The other, and standing in the threshold, said nothing !"

"And who expected to see anything," said he, "excepting those terrified oafs, who take for a puff of wind that whistles through the old dungeon ?"

"Mark you, Master Tomkins," said o

## WOODSTOCK.

men in a whisper to the steward,—“See how the minister pressed forward before all of them. Tomkins, our parson is the real commissioned the church—your lay-preachers are no better parcel of club-men and volunteers.”

“Follow me, those who list,” said Masten enough, “or go before me those who choose to walk through the habitable places of this house. I leave it, and satisfy myself whether Satan has mingled himself among these dreary dens of wickedness, or whether, like the wicked of whom David speaketh, we are afraid, and flee when he pursueth.”

Harrison, who had heard these words, sprang from his seat, and drawing his sword, exclaimed there as many fiends in the house as there are in my head, upon this cause I will charge them to the very trenches !”

So saying, he brandished his weapon, and moved to the head of the column, where he moved side by side with the minister. The Mayor of Woodstock nerved the body, thinking himself safer perhaps in the presence of his pastor ; and the whole train moved forward in order, accompanied by the servants bearing torches to search the Lodge for some cause of that panic which they seemed to be suddenly seized.

“Nay, take me with you, my friends,” said Everard, who had looked on in surprise, and was about to follow the party, when Bletson laid hold of his cloak, and begged him to remain.

“You see, my good Colonel,” he said, at a loss for the courage which his shaking voice belied, “here you and I and honest Desborough left behind our son, while all the others are absent on a sally. I do not hazard the whole troops in one sortie—the military—Ha, ha, ha !”

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"In the name of Heaven, what means all this?" said Gerard. "I heard a foolish tale about apparitions as I came this way, and now I find you all half mad with fear, and cannot get a word of sense among so many of you. Fie, Colonel Desborough—fie, Master Bletson—try to compose yourselves, and let me know in Heaven's name the cause of all this disturbance. One would be apt to think your brains were turned."

"And so mine well may," said Desborough, "ay, and overturned too, since my bed last night was turned upside down, and I was placed for ten minutes heels uppermost, and head downmost, like a bullock going to be shod."

"What means this nonsense, Master Bletson?—Desborough must have had the nightmare."

"No, faith, Colonel; the goblins, or whatever else they were, had been favourable to honest Desborough, for they reposed the whole of his person on that part of his body which—Hark, did you not hear something?—is the central point of gravity, namely, his head."

"Did you see anything to alarm you?" said the Colonel.

"Nothing," said Bletson; "but we heard hellish noises, as all our people did; and I, believing little of ghosts and apparitions, concluded the cavaliers were taking us at advantage; so, remembering Rainsborough's fate, I e'en jumped the window, and ran to Woodstock, to call the soldiers to the rescue of Harrison and Desborough."

"And did you not first go to see what the danger was?"

"Ah, my good friend, you forget that I laid down my commission at the time of the self-denying ordinance. It would have been quite inconsistent with my duty as Parliament-man to be brawling amidst a set of ruffians without any military authority. No—when the P

## WOODSTOCK.

ment commanded me to sheathe my sword, Colonel; I have too much veneration for their authority to be found again with it drawn in my hand."

"But the Parliament," said Desborough, hastily, "did not command you to use your heels when your hands could have saved a man from choking. Odds dickens! you might have stopped when you saw my bed canted heels uppermost, and me half stifled in the bed-clothes—you might, I say, have stopped and lent a hand to put it to rights, instead of jumping out of the window, like a new-shorn sheep, so soon as you had run across my room."

"Nay, worshipful Master Desborough," said Bletson, winking on Everard, to show that he was playing on his thick-skulled colleague, "how could I tell your particular mode of reposing?—there are many tastes—I have known men who slept by choice on a slope or angle of forty-five."

"Yes, but did ever a man sleep standing on his head, except by miracle?" said Desborough.

"Now, as to miracles"—said the philosopher, confident in the presence of Everard, besides that an opportunity of scoffing at religion really in some degree diverted his fear—"I leave these out of the question, seeing that the evidence on such subjects seems as little qualified to carry conviction as a horse-hair to land a leviathan."

A loud clap of thunder, or a noise as formidable, rang through the Lodge as the scoffer had ended, which struck him pale and motionless, and made Desborough throw himself on his knees, and repeat exclamations and prayers in much admired confusion.

"There must be contrivance here," exclaimed Everard: and snatching one of the candles from a sconce, he rushed out of the apartment, little heeding the entreaties of the philosopher, who, in the extremity of his distress, co

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and a Parliam  
Desborough, he  
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to a sort of *vil-de-bæu*,  
hall, from which vari  
these doors, Everard se  
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of Henry VIII., and w  
south-west side of the  
ferent points with the



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drawn, or, as he rather conceived, by somebody from within resisting his attempt. He was induced to believe the latter, because the resistance slackened and was renewed, like that of human strength, instead of presenting the permanent opposition of an inanimate obstacle. Though Everard was a strong and active young man, he exhausted his strength in the vain attempt to open the door ; and having paused to take breath, was about to renew his efforts with foot and shoulder, and to call at the same time for assistance, when, to his surprise, on again attempting the door more gently, in order to ascertain if possible where the strength of the opposing obstacle was situated, he found it give way to a very slight impulse, some impediment fell broken to the ground, and the door flew wide open. The gust of wind occasioned by the sudden opening of the door, blew out the candle, and Everard was left in darkness, save where the moonshine, which the long side-row of latticed windows dimmed, could imperfectly force its way into the gallery, which lay in ghostly length before him.

The melancholy and doubtful twilight was increased by a quantity of creeping plants on the outside, which, since all had been neglected in these ancient halls, now completely overgrown, had in some instances greatly diminished, and in others almost quite choked up, the space of the lattices, extending between the heavy stone shaftwork which divided the windows, both lengthways and across. On the other side there were no windows at all, and the gallery had been once hung round with paintings, chiefly portraits, by which that side of the apartment had been adorned. Most of the pictures *had been removed, yet the empty frames of some, and the tattered remnants of others, were still visible along the extent of the waste gallery ; the look of which was so desolate, and it appeared so well adapted for mis-*

## WOODSTOCK.

supposing there were enemies near him, that he could not help pausing at the entrance, and commending himself to God, ere, drawing his sword, he advanced into the apartment, treading as lightly as possible, and keeping in the shadow as much as he could.

Markham Everard was by no means superstitious, but he had the usual credulity of the times; and though he did not yield easily to tales of supernatural visitations, yet he could not help thinking he was in the very situation, where, if such things were ever permitted, they might be expected to take place, while his own stealthy and ill-assured pace, his drawn weapon, and extended arms, being the very attitude and action of doubt and suspicion, tended to increase in his mind the gloomy feelings of which they are the usual indications, and with which they are constantly associated. Under such unpleasant impressions, and conscious of the neighbourhood of something unfriendly, Colonel Everard had already advanced about half along the gallery, when he heard some one sigh very near him, and a low soft voice pronounce his name.

"Here I am," he replied, while his heart beat thick and short. "Who calls on Markham Everard?"

Another sigh was the only answer.

"Speak," said the Colonel, "whoever or whatsoever you are, and tell with what intent and purpose you are lurking in these apartments?"

"With a better intent than yours," returned the soft voice.

"Than mine!" answered Everard in great surprise.

"Who are you that you dare judge of my intents?"

"What or who are you, Markham Everard, who wander by moonlight through these deserted halls of royalty, where none should be but those who meet their downfall, or are sworn to avenge it?"

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"It is—and yet it cannot be," said Everard; "yet it is, and must be. Alice Lee, the devil or you speaks. Answer me, I conjure you!—speak openly—on what dangerous scheme are you engaged? where is your father? why are you here?—wherefore do you run so deadly a venture?—Speak, I conjure you, Alice Lee!"

"She who you call on is at the distance of miles from this spot. What if her Genius speaks when she is absent?—what if the soul of an ancestress of hers and yours were now addressing you?—what if"—

"Nay," answered Everard, "but what if the dearest of human beings has caught a touch of her father's enthusiasm!—what if she is exposing her person to danger, her reputation to scandal, by traversing in disguise and darkness a house filled with armed men? Speak to me, my fair cousin, in your own person. I am furnished with powers to protect my uncle, Sir Henry—to protect you too, dearest Alice, even against the consequences of this visionary and wild attempt. Speak—I see where you are, and, with all my respect, I cannot submit to be thus practised upon. Trust me—trust your cousin Markham with your hand, and believe that he will die or place you in honourable safety."

As he spoke, he exercised his eyes as keenly as possible to detect where the speaker stood; and it seemed to him, that about three yards from him there was a shadowy form, of which he could not discern even the outline, placed as it was within the deep and prolonged shadow thrown by a space of wall intervening betwixt two windows upon that side of the room from which the light was admitted. He endeavoured to calculate *as well as he could*, the distance betwixt himself and *object which he watched*, under the impression, that *by even using a slight degree of compulsion*, he could detach his beloved Alice from the confederacy into which

## WOODSTOCK.

ad her father's zeal for the cause of royalty  
ged her, he would be rendering them both the  
ential favour. He could not indeed but con-  
at however successfully the plot which he con-  
to be in agitation had proceeded against the timid  
n, the stupid Desborough, and the crazy Harri-  
there was little doubt that at length their artifices  
t necessarily bring shame and danger on those en-  
ged in it.

It must also be remembered, that Everard's affection  
o his cousin, although of the most respectful and de-  
voted character, partook less of the distant veneration  
which a lover of those days entertained for the lady  
whom he worshipped with humble diffidence, than of  
the fond and familiar feelings which a brother entertains  
towards a younger sister, whom he thinks himself en-  
titled to guide, advise, and even in some degree to con-  
trol. So kindly and intimate had been their intercourse,  
that he had little more hesitation in endeavouring to  
arrest her progress in the dangerous course in which she  
seemed to be engaged, even at the risk of giving her  
momentary offence, than he would have had in snatching  
her from a torrent or conflagration, at the chance of  
hurting her by the violence of his grasp. All this passed  
through his mind in the course of a single minute ; and  
he resolved at all events to detain her on the spot, and  
compel, if possible, an explanation from her.

With this purpose, Everard again conjured his cousin,  
in the name of Heaven, to give up this idle and dan-  
gerous mummery ; and, lending an accurate ear to her  
answer, endeavoured from the sound to calculate as  
nearly as possible the distance between them.

" I am not *she* for whom you take me," said the voice ;  
"*and dearer regards than aught connected with her life  
or death, bid me warn you to keep aloof, and leave this  
place.*"

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"Not till I have convinced you of your childish folly," said the Colonel, springing forward, and endeavouring to catch hold of her who spoke to him. But no female form was within his grasp. On the contrary he was met by a shock which could come from no woman's arm, and which was rude enough to stretch him on his back on the floor. At the same time he felt the point of a sword at his throat, and his hand so completely mastered, that not the slightest defence remained to him.

"A cry for assistance," said a voice near him, but not that which he had hitherto heard, "will be stifled in your blood!—No harm is meant you—be wise and be silent."

The fear of death which Everard had often braved in the field of battle, became more intense as he felt himself in the hands of unknown assassins, and totally devoid of all means of defence. The sharp point of the sword pricked his bare throat, and the foot of him who held it was upon his breast. He felt as if a single thrust would put an end to life, and all the feverish joys and sorrows which agitate us so strangely, and from which we are yet so reluctant to part. Large drops of perspiration stood upon his forehead—his heart throbbed as if it would burst from its confinement in the bosom—he experienced the agony which fear imposes on the brave man, acute in proportion to that which pain inflicts when it subdues the robust and healthy.

"Cousin Alice,"—he attempted to speak, and the sword's point pressed his throat yet more closely,—"Cousin, let me not be murdered in a manner so fearful!"

"I tell you," replied the voice, "that you speak to one who is not here; but your life is not aimed at, provided you swear, on your faith as a Christian and your honour as a gentleman, that you will conceal what happened, whether from the people below or from :

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other person. On this condition you may rise ; and if you seek her, you will find Alice Lee at Joceline's cottage in the forest."

"Since I may not help myself otherwise," said Everard, "I swear, as I have a sense of religion and honour, I will say nothing of this violence, nor make any search after those who are concerned in it."

"For that we care nothing," said the voice. "Thou hast an example how well thou mayst catch mischief on thy own part ; but we are in case to defy thee. Rise, and begone."

The foot, the sword's point, were withdrawn, and Everard, was about to start up hastily, when the voice, in the same softness of tone which distinguished it at first, said, "No haste—cold and bare steel is yet around thee. Now—now—now—[the words dying away as at a distance]—thou art free. Be secret and be safe."

Markham Everard arose, and in rising embarrassed his feet with his own sword, which he had dropped when springing forward, as he supposed, to lay hold of his fair cousin. He snatched it up in haste, and as his hand clasped the hilt, his courage, which had given way under the apprehension of instant death, began to return ; he considered, with almost his usual composure, what was to be done next. Deeply affronted at the disgrace which he had sustained, he questioned for an instant whether he ought to keep his extorted promise, or should not rather summon assistance, and make haste to discover and seize those who had been recently engaged in such violence on his person. But these persons, be they who they would, had had his life in their power—he had pledged his word in ransom of it—and what was more, he could not divest himself the idea that his beloved Alice was a confidant least, if not an actor, in the confederacy which had

baffled him. This prepossession determined his conduct; for, though angry at supposing she must have been accessory to his personal ill-treatment, he could not in any event think of an instant search through the mansion, which might have compromised her safety or that of his uncle. "But I will to the hut," he said—"I will instantly to the hut, ascertain her share in this wild and dangerous confederacy, and snatch her from ruin, if it be possible."

As, under the influence of the resolution which he had formed, Everard groped his way through the gallery and regained the vestibule, he heard his name called by the well-known voice of Wildrake. "What—ho!—holloa!—Colonel Everard—Mark Everard—it is dark as the devil's mouth—speak—where are you?—the witches are keeping their hellish sabbath here, as I think—Where are you?"

"Here, here!" answered Everard. "Cease your bawling. Turn to the left and you will meet me."

Guided by his voice, Wildrake soon appeared, with a light in one hand, and his drawn sword in the other. "Where have you been?" he said—"What has detained you?—Here are Bletson and the brute Desborough terrified out of their lives, and Harrison raving mad, because the devil will not be civil enough to rise to fight him in single *duello*."

"Saw or heard you nothing as you came along?" said Everard.

"Nothing," said his friend, "excepting that when I first entered this cursed ruinous labyrinth, the light was struck out of my hand, as if by a switch, which obliged me to return for another."

"I must come by a horse instantly, Wildrake, another for thyself if it be possible."

"We can take two of those belonging to the troop," answered Wildrake. "But for what purpose should

**WOOL**

like rats, at this  
ag ? ”

not answer you,  
into a room where

.e.

e the cavalier took a  
exclaimed in wonder,  
fighting with, Markh  
or this sorry fashion ? ”

“ Fighting ! ” exclaimed

“ Yes,” replied his trust

Look at yourself in the mirror

He did, and saw he was  
The latter proceeded forward  
received in the throat, as he  
With unaffected alarm,  
collar, and with eager haste  
wound, his hands trembling  
apprehension for his benefit  
of Everard's opposition, he  
found it trifling, he resumed  
character, perhaps the more  
shame in departing from  
more of feeling than he was

“ If that be the devil's  
foul fiend's claws are not now  
represented ; but no one shall  
be seen shed unrevenged wounds



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the roop-horses—command them for the service of the public, in the name of his Excellency the General. I will but wash, and join you in an instant before the gate."

"Well, I will serve you, Everard, as a mute serves the Grand Signior, without knowing why or wherefore. But will you go without seeing these people below?"

"Without seeing any one," said Everard; "lose no time, for God's sake."

He found out the non-commissioned officer, and demanded the horses in a tone of authority, to which the corporal yielded undisputed obedience, as one well aware of Colonel Everard's military rank and consequence. So all was in a minute or two ready for the expedition.

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## CHAP. XIII.

*— She kneel'd, and saintlike  
Cast her eyes to heaven, and pray'd devoutly.*

KING HENRY VIII.

**C**OLONEL EVERARD'S departure at the late hour, for so it was then thought, of seven in the evening, excited much speculation. There was a gathering of menials and dependants in the outer chamber or hall, for no one doubted that his sudden departure was owing to his having, as they expressed it, "seen something," and all desired to know how a man of such acknowledged courage as Everard looked under the awe of a recent apparition. But he gave them no time to make comments; for, striding through the hall wrapped in his riding suit, he threw himself on horse-back, and rode furiously through the Chase, towards the hut of the keeper Joliffe.

*It was the disposition of Markham Everard to be tenacious, earnest, impatient, and decisive to a degree of*

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ipitation. The acquired habits which education had taught, and which the strong moral and religious discipline of his sect had greatly strengthened, were such as to enable him to conceal, as well as to check, this constitutional violence, and to place him upon his guard against indulging it. But when in the high tide of violent excitation, the natural impetuosity of the young soldier's temper was sometimes apt to overcome these artificial obstacles, and then, like a torrent foaming over a wear, it became more furious, as if in revenge for the constrained calm which it had been for some time obliged to assume. In these instances he was accustomed to see only that point to which his thoughts were bent, and to move straight towards it, whether a moral object, or the storming of a breach, without either calculating, or even appearing to see, the difficulties which were before him.

At present, his ruling and impelling motive was to detach his beloved cousin, if possible, from the dangerous and discreditable machinations in which he suspected her to have engaged, or, on the other hand, to discover that she really had no concern with these stratagems. He should know how to judge of that in some measure, he thought, by finding her present or absent at the hut, towards which he was now galloping. He had read, indeed, in some ballad or minstrel's tale, of a singular deception practised on a jealous old man, by means of a subterranean communication between his house and that of a neighbour, which the lady in question made use of to present herself in the two places alternately, with such speed, and so much address, that, after repeated experiments, the dotard was deceived into the opinion, that his wife, and the lady who was so very like her, and to whom *his neighbour* paid so much attention, were two different persons. But in the present case there was no room for such a deception; the distance was too great, and

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c by much the nearest way from the castle, and rode speed, it would be impossible, he knew, for his isin, who was a timorous horsewoman, even by day-ht, to have got home before him.

Her father might indeed be displeased at his interference ; but what title had he to be so?—Was not Alice Lee the near relation of his blood, the dearest object of his heart, and would he now abstain from an effort to save her from the consequences of a silly and wild conspiracy, because the old knight's spleen might be awakened by Everard's making his appearance at their present dwelling contrary to his commands? No. He would endure the old man's harsh language, as he endured the blast of the autumn wind, which was howling around him, and swinging the crashing branches of the trees under which he passed, but could not oppose, or even retard, his journey.

If he found not Alice, as he had reason to believe she would be absent, to Sir Henry Lee himself he would explain what he had witnessed. However she might have become accessory to the juggling tricks performed at Woodstock, he could not but think it was without her father's knowledge, so severe a judge was the old knight of female propriety, and so strict an assertor of female decorum. He would take the same opportunity, he thought, of stating to him the well-grounded hopes he entertained, that his dwelling at the Lodge might be prolonged, and the sequestrators removed from the royal mansion and domains, by other means than those of the absurd species of intimidation which seemed to be resorted to, to scare them from thence.

All this seemed to be so much within the line of duty as a relative, that it was not until he halted at the door of the ranger's hut, and threw his bridle into Vane's hand, that Everard recollected the fiery, high bending character of Sir Henry Lee, and felt



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ingers were on the latch, a  
on the presence of the in  
ere was no time for hesitat  
bayed more than once fro  
owing impatient, and Evera  
Wildrake hold the horses  
ine to his assistance, when ol  
r, to demand who was without  
ght. To have attempted anythin  
th poor dame Joan, would have  
he Colonel, therefore, put her gen  
himself loose from the hold she h  
entered the kitchen of Joceline's  
had advanced to support Joan in  
bled his lion-port, with that wor  
makes his race remember so long t  
have been familiar, and acknowled  
tive, by doing homage in his fashic  
tail.

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voice, was reading the Evening Service according to the Church of England. Alice Lee kneeled at the feet of her father, and made the responses with a voice that might have suited the choir of angels ; and a modest and serious devotion, which suited the melody of her tone. The face of the officiating clergyman would have been good-looking, had it not been disfigured with a black patch which covered the left eye and a part of his face, and had not the features which were visible been marked with the traces of care and suffering.

When Colonel Everard entered, the clergyman raised his finger, as cautioning him to forbear disturbing the divine service of the evening, and pointed to a seat ; to which, struck deeply with the scene he had witnessed, the intruder stole with as light a step as possible, and knelt devoutly down as one of the little congregation.

Everard had been bred by his father what was called a Puritan ; a member of a sect who, in the primitive sense of the word, were persons that did not except against the doctrines of the Church of England, or even in all respects against its hierarchy, but chiefly dissented from it on the subject of certain ceremonies, habits, and forms of ritual, which were insisted upon by the celebrated and unfortunate Laud with ill-timed tenacity. But even if, from the habits of his father's house, Everard's opinions had been diametrically opposed to the doctrines of the English Church, he must have been reconciled to them by the regularity with which the service was performed in his uncle's family at Woodstock, who, during the blossom of his fortunes, generally had a chaplain residing in the Lodge for that special purpose.

*Yet deep as was the habitual veneration with which he heard the impressive service of the Church, Everard's eyes could not help straying towards Alice, and his thoughts wandering to the purpose of his presence there*

repeated the responses. . . .

he could collect by the stolen glances which he  
towards her, that the character of her beauty,  
s of her outward appearance, had changed with  
ines.

beautiful and high-born young lady had now ap-  
d as nearly as possible to the brown stuff dress  
rdinary village maiden ; but what she had lost in  
of appearance, she had gained as it seemed in  
. Her beautiful light-brown tresses, now folded  
l her head, and only curled where nature had so  
ed them, gave her an air of simplicity, which did  
dist when her head-dress showed the skill of a  
s tire-woman. A light joyous air, with something  
umorous expression, which seemed to be looking  
usement, had vanished before the touch of afflict  
and a calm melancholy supplied its place, whic  
d on the watch to administer comfort to other  
f . . . arch, though innocent expression . . .  
in recollection

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service now approached the close, and a good deal to Colonel Everard's surprise, as well as confusion, the officiating priest, in firm and audible tone, and with every attribute of dignity, prayed to the Almighty to bless and preserve "Our Sovereign Lord, King Charles, the lawful and undoubted King of these realms." The petition (in those days most dangerous) was pronounced with a full, raised, and distinct articulation, as if the priest challenged all who heard him to dissent, if they dared. If the republican officer did not assent to the petition, he thought at least it was no time to protest against it.

The service was concluded in the usual manner, and the little congregation arose. It now included Wildrake, who had entered during the latter prayer, and was the first of the party to speak, running up to the priest, and shaking him by the hand most heartily, swearing at the same time that he truly rejoiced to see him. The good clergyman returned the pressure with a smile, observing he should have believed his asseveration without an oath. In the meanwhile, Colonel Everard, approaching his uncle's seat, made a deep inclination of respect, first to Sir Henry Lee, and then to Alice, whose colour now spread from her cheek to her brow and bosom.

"I have to crave your excuse," said the Colonel with hesitation, "for having chosen for my visit, which I dare not hope would be very agreeable at any time, a season most peculiarly unsuitable."

"So far from it, nephew," answered Sir Henry, with much more mildness of manner than Everard had dared to expect, "that your visits at other times would be much more welcome, had we the fortune to see you often *our hours of worship.*"

"*I hope the time will soon come, sir, when English men of all sects and denominations,*" replied Everard, "*will be free in conscience to worship in common*"

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ier, whom they all after their manner call by affectionate name."

"I hope so too, nephew," said the old man in the unaltered tone; "and we will not at present discuss whether you would have the Church of England in alliance with the Conventicle, or the Conventicle connected to the Church. It was, I ween, not to settle jarring points, that you have honoured our poor dwelling, where, I say the truth, we dared scarce have expected to see you again, so coarse was our last welcome."

"I should be happy to believe," said Colonel Everard, hesitating, "that—that—in short my presence was not now so unwelcome here as on that occasion."

"Nephew," said Sir Henry, "I will be frank with you. When you were last here, I thought you had stolen from me a precious pearl, which at one time it would have been my pride and happiness to have bestowed on you; but which, being such as you have been of late, I would bury in the depths of the earth rather than give to your keeping. This somewhat chafed, as honest Will says, 'the rash humour which my mother gave me.' I thought I was robbed, and I thought I saw the robber before me. I am mistaken—I am not robbed; and the attempt without the deed I can pardon."

"I would not willingly seek offence in your words, sir," said Colonel Everard, "when their general purport sounds kind; but I can protest before Heaven, that my views and wishes towards you and your family are as void of selfish hopes and selfish ends, as they are fraught with love to you and to yours."

"Let us hear them, man; we are not much accustomed to good wishes now-a-days; and their very rarity will make them welcome."

"I would willingly, Sir Henry, since you might not choose me to give you a more affectionate name, convert my wishes into something effectual for your comfort



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Your fate, as the world now stands, is bad, and, I fear, like to be worse."

"Worse than I expect it cannot be. Nephew, I do not shrink before my changes of fortune. I shall wear coarser clothes,—I shall feed on more ordinary food,—men will not doff their cap to me as they were wont, when I was the great and the wealthy. What of that? Old Harry Lee loved his honour better than his title, his faith better than his land and lordship. Have I not seen the 30th of January? I am neither philomath nor astrologer; but old Will teaches me, that when green leaves fall winter is at hand, and that darkness will come when the sun sets."

"Bethink you, sir," said Colonel Everard, "if, without any submission asked, any oath taken, any engagement imposed, express or tacit, excepting that you are not to excite disturbances in the public peace, you can be restored to your residence in the Lodge, and your usual fortunes and perquisites there—I have great reason to hope this may be permitted, if not expressly, at least on sufferance."

"Yes, I understand you. I am to be treated like the royal coin, marked with the ensign of the Rump to make it pass current, although I am too old to have the royal insignia grinded off from me. Kinsman, I will have none of this. I have lived at the Lodge too long; and let me tell you, I had left it in scorn long since, but for the orders of one whom I may yet live to do service to. I will take nothing from the usurpers, be their name Rump or Cromwell—be they one devil or legion—I will not take from them an old cap to cover my grey hairs—a cast cloak to protect my frail limbs from the cold.

*They shall not say they have, by their unwilling bounty, made Abraham rich—I will live, as I will die, the Loyal Lee."*

*"May I hope you will think of it, sir; and that you*

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perhaps, considering what slight submission is  
I, give me a better answer?"

Sir, if I retract my opinion, which is not my wont,  
shall hear of it.—And now, cousin, have you more  
ay? We keep that worthy clergyman in the outer  
an."

"Something I had to say—something touching my  
usin Alice," said Everard, with embarrassment; "but  
fear that the prejudices of both are so strong against  
,"——

"Sir, I dare turn my daughter loose to you—I will go  
n the good doctor in dame Joan's apartment. I am  
t unwilling that you should know that the girl hath,  
all reasonable sort, the exercise of her free will."

He withdrew, and left the cousins together.

Colonel Everard advanced to Alice, and was about to  
ke her hand. She drew back, took the seat which her  
ther had occupied, and pointed out to him one at some  
stance.

"Are we then so much estranged, my dearest Alice?"  
said.

"We will speak of that presently," she replied. "In  
e first place, let me ask the cause of your visit here at  
late an hour."

"You heard," said Everard, "what I stated to your  
ther?"

"I did; but that seems to have been only part of your  
rand—something there seemed to be which applied  
rticularly to me."

"It was a fancy—a strange mistake," answered Eve-  
rd. "May I ask if you have been abroad this evening?"

"Certainly not," she replied. "I have small tempta-  
m to wander from my present home, poor as it is; and  
ilst here, I have important duties to discharge. But  
r does Colonel Everard ask so strange a question?"  
Tell me in turn, why your cousin Markham has  
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the name of friendship and kindred, and even of some nearer feeling, and then I will answer you, Alice."

"It is soon answered," she said. "When you drew your sword against my father's cause—almost against his person—I studied, more than I should have done, to find excuse for you. I knew, that is, I thought I knew, your high feelings of public duty—I knew the opinions in which you had been bred up; and I said, I will not, even for this, cast him off—he opposes his King because he is loyal to his country. You endeavoured to avert the great and concluding tragedy of the 30th of January; and it confirmed me in my opinion, that Markham Everard might be misled, but could not be base or selfish."

"And what has changed your opinion, Alice? or who dare," said Everard, reddening, "attach such epithets to the name of Markham Everard?"

"I am no subject," she said, "for exercising your valour, Colonel Everard, nor do I mean to offend. But you will find enough of others who will avow, that Colonel Everard is truckling to the usurper Cromwell, and that all his fair pretexts of forwarding his country's liberties, are but a screen for driving a bargain with the successful encroacher, and obtaining the best terms he can for himself and his family."

"For myself—Never!"

"But for your family you have—Yes, I am well assured that you have pointed out to the military tyrant the way in which he and his satraps may master the government. Do you think my father or I would accept an asylum purchased at the price of England's liberty, and your honour?"

"Gracious Heaven, Alice, what is this? You accuse *me of pursuing* the very course which so lately had your *approbation!*"

"When you spoke with authority of your father, and recommended our submission to the existing govern-

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as it was, I own I thought—that my father's might, without dishonour, have remained roof where it had so long been sheltered. Our father sanction your becoming the adviser of an ambitious soldier to a new course of innovation—his abettor in the establishment of a new tyranny?—It is one thing to submit to oppression—to be the agent of tyrants—And oh, —their bloodhound!"

—bloodhound?—what mean you?—I own it could see with content the wounds of this country stanch'd, even at the expense of becoming well, after his matchless rise, take a yet further step to power—but to be his bloodhound! What meaning?"

—false, then?—Ah, I thought I could swear it false."

—in the name of God, is it you ask?"

—I see that you are engaged to betray the young country?"

—him! / betray him, or any fugitive? Never! Were he well out of England—I would lend him no aid; were he in the house at this instant; acting so I did his enemies good service, their soiling themselves with his blood—, never!"

—I was sure it was impossible. Oh, be content; disengage yourself from yonder ambitious soldier! Shun him and his schemes, which are formed in injustice, and can only bring forth more blood!"

—replied Everard, "that I choose the course most befitting the times."

—"she said, "which best befits duty. The best befits truth and honour. Do as Providence decide the rest.—Fare-

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well! we tempt my father's patience too far—you know his temper—farewell, Markham."


She extended her hand, which he pressed to his lips, and left the apartment. A silent bow to his uncle, and a sign to Wildrake, whom he found in the kitchen of the cabin, were the only tokens of recognition exhibited, and leaving the hut, he was soon mounted, and, with his companion, advanced on his return to the Lodge.

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## CHAP. XIV.

—————*Deeds are done on earth  
Which have their punishment ere the earth closes  
Upon the perpetrators. Be it the working  
Of the remorse-stirr'd fancy, or the vision,  
Distinct and real, of unearthly being,  
All ages witness, that beside the couch  
Of the fell homicide oft stalks the ghost  
Of him he slew, and shows the shadowy wound.*

OLD PLAY.

 VERARD had come to Joceline's hut as fast as horse could bear him, and with the same impetuosity of purpose as of speed. He saw no choice in the course to be pursued, and felt in his own imagination the strongest right to direct, and even reprove, his cousin, beloved as she was, on account of the dangerous machinations with which she appeared to have connected herself. He returned slowly, and in a very different mood.

Not only had Alice, prudent as beautiful, appeared completely free from the weakness of conduct which seemed to give him some authority over her, but her views of policy, if less practicable, were so much more direct and noble than his own, as led him to question whether he had not compromised himself too rashly with Cromwell.

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although the state of the country was so greatly  
ed and torn by faction, that the promotion of the  
eral to the possession of the executive government  
med the only chance of escaping a renewal of the Civil  
/ar. The more exalted and purer sentiments of Alice  
owered him in his own eyes ; and though unshaken in  
his opinion, that it were better the vessel should be steered  
by a pilot having no good title to the office, than that she  
should run upon the breakers, he felt that he was not  
espousing the most direct, manly, and disinterested side  
of the question.

As he rode on, immersed in these unpleasant contem-  
plations, and considerably lessened in his own esteem by  
what had happened, Wildrake, who rode by his side, and  
was no friend to long silence, began to enter into conver-  
sation. "I have been thinking, Mark," said he, "that  
if you and I had been called to the bar—as, by the by,  
has been in danger of happening to me in more senses  
than one—I say, had we become barristers, I would have  
have had the better oiled tongue of the two—the fairer art  
of persuasion."

"Perhaps so," replied Everard, "though I never heard  
thee use any, save to induce an usurer to lend thee money,  
or a taverner to abate a reckoning."

"And yet this day, or rather night, I could have, as I  
think, made a conquest which baffled you."

"Indeed?" said the Colonel, becoming atten-  
tive.

"Why, look you," said Wildrake, "it was a main  
object with you to induce Mistress Alice Lee—By Heaven,  
she is an exquisite creature—I approve of your taste,  
Mark—I say, you desire to persuade her, and the stout old  
Trojan her father, to consent to return to the Lodge, and  
live there quietly, and under connivance, like gentle folk,  
instead of lodging in a hut hardly fit to harbour a Tom  
of Bedlam."

## WOODSTOCK.

"Thou art right ; such, indeed, was a great part of my object in this visit," answered Everard.

"But perhaps you also expected to visit there yourself, and so keep watch over pretty Mistress Lee—eh?"

"I never entertained so selfish a thought," said Everard; "and if this nocturnal disturbance at the mansion were explained and ended, I would instantly take my departure."

"Your friend Noll would expect something more from you," said Wildrake; "he would expect, in case the knight's reputation for loyalty should draw any of our poor exiles and wanderers about the Lodge, that you should be on the watch and ready to snap them. In a word, as far as I can understand his long-winded speeches, he would have Woodstock a trap, your uncle and his pretty daughter the bait of toasted cheese—craving your Chloe's pardon for the comparison—you the spring-fall which should bar their escape, his Lordship himself being the great grimalkin to whom they are to be given over to be devoured."

"Dared Cromwell mention this to thee in express terms?" said Everard, pulling up his horse, and stopping in the midst of the road.

"Nay, not in express terms, which I do not believe he ever used in his life ; you might as well expect a drunken man to go straight forward ; but he insinuated as much to me, and indicated that you might deserve well of him—Gadzo, the damnable proposal sticks in my throat—by betraying our noble and rightful King [here he pulled off his hat], whom God grant in health and wealth long to reign, as the worthy clergyman says, though I fear just *now* his Majesty is both sick and sorry, and never a penny in his pouch to boot."

"*This tallies with what Alice hinted,*" said Everard ; "*but how could she know it? didst thou give her any int of such a thing?*"

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"I" replied the cavalier, "I, who never saw Mistress in my life till to-night, and then only for an instant oks, man, how is that possible?"

"True," replied Everard, and seemed lost in thought. length he spoke—"I should call Cromwell to account or his bad opinion of me; for, even though not seriously expressed, but as I am convinced it was with the sole view of proving you, and perhaps myself, it was, nevertheless, a misconstruction to be resented."

"I'll carry a cartel for you, with all my heart and soul," said Wildrake; "and turn out with his godliness's second, with as good will as I ever drank a glass of sack."

"Pshaw," replied Everard, "those in his high place fight no single combats. But tell me, Roger Wildrake, didst thou thyself think me capable of the falsehood and treachery implied in such a message?"

"I!" exclaimed Wildrake. "Markham Everard, you have been my early friend, my constant benefactor. When Colchester was reduced, you saved me from the gallows, and since that thou hast twenty times saved me from starving. But, by Heaven, if I thought you capable of such villany as your General recommended,—by yonder blue sky, and all the works of creation which it bends over, I would stab you with my own hand!"

"Death," replied Everard, "I should indeed deserve, but not from you, perhaps; but fortunately, I cannot if I would, be guilty of the treachery you would punish. Know that I had this day secret notice, and from Cromwell himself, that the young Man has escaped by sea from Bristol."

"Now, God Almighty be blessed, who protected him through so many dangers!" exclaimed Wildrake.

"Huzza!—Up hearts, cavaliers!—Hey for cavaliers—God bless King Charles!—Moon and stars, catch my hat!"—and he threw it up as high as he could into the



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air. The celestial bodies which he invoked did not receive the present despatched to them ; but, as in the case of Sir Henry Lee's scabbard, an old gnarled oak became a second time the receptacle of a waif and stray of loyal enthusiasm. Wildrake looked rather foolish at the circumstance, and his friend took the opportunity of admonishing him.

"Art thou not ashamed to bear thee so like a school-boy?"

"Why," said Wildrake, "I have but sent a Puritan's hat upon a loyal errand. I laugh to think how many of the school-boys thou talk'st of will be cheated into climbing the pollard next year, expecting to find the nest of some unknown bird in yonder unmeasured margin of felt."

"Hush now, for God's sake, and let us speak calmly," said Everard. "Charles has escaped, and I am glad of it. I would willingly have seen him on his father's throne by composition, but not by the force of the Scottish army, and the incensed and vengeful royalists."

"Master Markham Everard," began the cavalier, interrupting him——

"Nay, hush, dear Wildrake," said Everard ; "let us not dispute a point on which we cannot agree, and give me leave to go on.—I say, since the young Man has escaped, Cromwell's offensive and injurious stipulation falls to the ground ; and I see not why my uncle and his family should not again enter their own house, under the same terms of connivance as many other royalists. What may be incumbent on me is different, nor can I determine my course until I have an interview with the General, which, as I think, will end in *his confessing that he threw in this offensive proposal to sound us both. It is much in his manner ; for he is blunt, and never sees or feels the punctilious honour which the gallants of the day stretch to such delicacy.*"

## WOODSTOCK.

I acquit him of having any punctilio about him," Wildrake, "either touching honour or honesty. to come back to where we started. Supposing we were not to reside in person at the Lodge, and to bear even visiting there, unless on invitation, when such a thing can be brought about, I tell you frankly, I think your uncle and his daughter might be induced to come back to the Lodge, and reside there as usual. At least the clergyman, that worthy old cock, gave me to hope as much."

"He had been hasty in bestowing his confidence," said Everard.

"True," replied Wildrake; "he confided in me at once; for he instantly saw my regard for the Church. I thank Heaven I never passed a clergyman in his canonicals without pulling my hat off—(and thou knowest, the most desperate duel I ever fought was with young Grayless of the Inner Temple, for taking the wall of the Reverend Dr. Bunce)—Ah, I can gain a chaplain's ear instantly. Gadzooks, they know whom they have to trust to in such a one as I."

"Dost thou think, then," said Colonel Everard, "or rather does this clergyman think, that if they were secure of intrusion from me, the family would return to the Lodge, supposing the intruding Commissioners gone, and this nocturnal disturbance explained and ended?"

"The old Knight," answered Wildrake, "may be wrought upon by the Doctor to return, if he is secure against intrusion. As for disturbances, the stout old boy, so far as I can learn in two minutes' conversation, laughs at all this turmoil as the work of mere imagination, the consequence of the remorse of their own evil consciences; and says that goblin or devil was never heard of at Woodstock, until it became the residence of such men as *they*, who have now usurped the possession."

"There is more than imagination in it," said Everard.

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"I have personal reason to know there is some conspiracy carrying on, to render the house untenable by the Commissioners. I acquit my uncle of accession to such a silly trick ; but I must see it ended ere I can agree to his and my cousin's residing where such a confederacy exists ; for they are likely to be considered as the contrivers of such pranks, be the actual agent who he may."

"With reference to your better acquaintance with the gentleman, Everard, I should rather suspect the old father of Puritans (I beg your pardon again) has something to do with the business ; and if so, Lucifer will never look near the true old Knight's beard, nor abide a glance of yonder maiden's innocent blue eyes. I will uphold them as safe as pure gold in a miser's chest."

"Sawest thou aught thyself, which makes thee think thus?"

"Not a quill of the devil's pinion saw I," replied Wildrake. "He supposes himself too secure of an old cavalier, who must steal, hang, or drown, in the long run, so he gives himself no trouble to look after the assured booty. But I heard the serving-fellows prate of what they had seen and heard ; and though their tales were confused enough, yet if there was any truth among them at all, I should say the devil must have been in the dance.—But, holla ! here comes some one upon us.—Stand, friend—who art thou?"

"A poor day-labourer in the great work of England—Joseph Tomkins by name—Secretary to a godly and well-endowed leader in this poor Christian army of England, called General Harrison."

"What news, Master Tomkins?" said Everard ; "and why are you on the road at this late hour?"

"I speak to the worthy Colonel Everard, as I judge said Tomkins ; "and truly I am glad of meeting yc honour—Heaven knows I need such assistance as yo—Oh, worthy Master Everard !—Here has been a son

## WOODSTOCK.

**A trumpets, and a breaking of vials, and a pouring  
n, and "——**

**"Prithce, tell me in brief what is the matter—where  
thy master—and, in a word, what has happened?"**

**"My master is close by, parading it in the little  
meadow, beside the hugeous oak, which is called by the  
name of the late Man; ride but two steps forward, and  
you may see him walking swiftly to and fro, advancing  
all the while the naked weapon."**

**Upon proceeding as directed, but with as little noise as  
possible, they descried a man, whom of course they con-  
cluded must be Harrison, walking to and fro beneath the  
King's oak, as a sentinel under arms, but with more  
wildness of demeanour. The tramp of the horses did not  
escape his ear; and they heard him call out, as if at the  
head of the brigade—"Lower pikes against cavalry!—  
Here comes Prince Rupert—Stand fast, and you shall  
turn them aside, as a bull would toss a cur-dog.—Lower  
our pikes still, my hearts, the end secured against your  
rot—down on your right knee, front rank—spare not for  
e spoiling of your blue aprons.—Ha—Zerobabel—ay,  
at is the word!"**

**"In the name of Heaven, about whom or what is he  
king?" said Everard; "wherefore does he go about  
h his weapon drawn?"**

**Truly, sir, when aught disturbs my master, General  
rison, he is something rapt in the spirit, and conceives  
he is commanding a reserve of pikes at the great  
e of Armageddon—and for his weapon, alack, worthy  
wherefore should he keep Sheffield steel in calves'  
er, when there are fiends to be combated—incarnate  
; on earth, and raging infernal fiends under the  
,"**

**"Is is intolerable," said Everard. "Listen to me,  
s. Thou art not now in the pulpit, and I desire  
thy preaching language. I know thou canst**

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speak intelligibly when thou art so minded. Remember, I may serve or harm thee ; and as you hope or fear anything on my part, answer straightforward—What has happened to drive out thy master to the wild wood at this time of night ? ”

“ Forsooth, worthy and honoured sir, I will speak with the precision I may. True it is, and of verity, that the breath of man, which is in his nostrils, goeth forth and returneth ”——

“ Hark you, sir,” said Colonel Everard, “ take care where you ramble in your correspondence with me. You have heard how at the great battle of Dunbar in Scotland, the General himself held a pistol to the head of Lieutenant Hewcreed, threatening to shoot him through the brain if he did not give up holding forth, and put his squadron in line to the front. Take care, sir.”

“ Verily the lieutenant then charged with an even and unbroken order,” said Tomkins, “ and bore a thousand plaids and bonnets over the beach before him into the sea. Neither shall I pretermitt or postpone your honour’s commands, but speedily obey them, and that without delay.”

“ Go to, fellow ; thou knowest what I would have,” said Everard ; “ speak at once—I know thou canst if thou wilt. Trusty Tomkins is better known than he thinks for.”

“ Worthy sir,” said Tomkins, in a much less periphrastic style, “ I will obey your worship as far as the spirit will permit. Truly, it was not an hour since, when my worshipful master being at table with Master Bibbet and myself, not to mention the worshipful Master Bletson and Colonel Desborough, and behold there was *a violent knocking at the gate, as of one in haste. Now, of a certainty, so much had our household been harassed with witches and spirits, and other objects of und and sight, that the sentinels could not be brought*

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abide upon their posts without doors, and it was by a provision of beef and strong liquors that were able to maintain a guard of three men in the hall, who nevertheless ventured not to open the door, lest they should be surprised with some of the goblins wherewith their imaginations were overwhelmed. And they heard the knocking, which increased until it seemed that the door was well-nigh about to be beaten down. Worthy Master Bibbet was a little overcome with liquor (as is his fashion, good man, about this time of the evening), not that he is in the least given to ebriety, but simply, that since the Scottish campaign he hath had a perpetual ague, which obliges him so to nourish his frame against the damps of the night ; wherefore, as it is well known to your honour that I discharge the office of a faithful servant, as well to Major-General Harrison, and the other Commissioners, as to my just and lawful master Colonel Desborough "——

" I know all that.—And now that thou art trusted by both, I pray to Heaven thou mayst merit the trust," said Colonel Everard.

" And devoutly do I pray," said Tomkins, " that your worshipful prayers may be answered with favour ; for certainly to be, and to be called and entitled, Honest Joe, and Trusty Tomkins, is to me more than ever would be an Earl's title, were such things to be granted anew in this regenerated government."

" Well, go on—go on—or if thou dalliest much longer, I will make bold to dispute the article of your honesty. I like short tales, sir, and doubt what is told with a long unnecessary train of words."

" Well, good sir, be not hasty. As I said before, the doors rattled till you would have thought the knocking *was* reiterated in every room of the Palace. The bell rung out for company, though we could not find that *one* tolled the capper, and the guards let off their

## WOODSTOCK.

locks, merely because they knew not what better to do. So, Master Bibbet being, as I said, unsusceptible of his duty, I went down with my poor rapier to the door, and demanded who was there ; and I was answered in a voice which, I must say, was much like another voice, that it was one wanting General Harrison. So, as it was then late, I answered mildly, that General Harrison was betaking himself to his rest, and that any who wished to speak to him must return on the morrow morning, for that after nightfall the door of the Palace, being in the room of a garrison, would be opened to no one. So the voice replied, and bid me open directly, without which he would blow the folding leaves of the door into the middle of the hall. And therewithal the noise recommenced, that we thought the house would have fallen ; and I was in some measure constrained to open the door, even like a besieged garrison which can hold out no longer."

"By my honour, and it was stoutly done of you, I must say," said Wildrake, who had been listening with much interest. "I am a bold dare-devil enough, yet when I had two inches of oak plank between the actual fiend and me, hang him that would demolish the barrier between us, say I—I would as soon, when aboard, bore a hole in the ship, and let in the waves ; for you know we always compare the devil to the deep sea."

"Prithee, peace, Wildrake," said Everard, "and let him go on with his history.—Well, and what saw'st thou when the door was opened?—the great Devil with his horns and claws thou wilt say, no doubt."

"No, sir, I will say nothing by what is true. When I undid the door, one man stood there, and he, to seeming, a man of no extraordinary appearance. He was wrapped in a taffeta cloak, of a scarlet colour, and with a red lining. He seemed as if he might have been in his time very handsome man, but there was something of pal-

## WOODSTOCK.

d sorrow in his face—a long love-lock and long wore, even after the abomination of the cavaliers, the unloveliness, as learned Master Prynne well said, of love-locks—a jewel in his ear—a blue scarf on his shoulder, like a military commander for the day, and a hat with a white plume, bearing a peculiar band."

"Some unhappy officer of cavaliers, of whom so many are in hiding, and seeking shelter through the country," briefly replied Everard.

"True, worthy sir—right as a judicious exposition. But there was something about this man (if he was a man) whom I, for once, could not look upon without trembling; nor the musketeers, who were in the hall, without betraying much alarm, and swallowing, as they themselves will aver, the very bullets which they had in their mouths for loading their carabines and muskets. Nay, the wolf and deer dogs, that are the fiercest of their kind, fled from this visitor, and crept into holes and corners, moaning and wailing in a low and broken tone. He came into the middle of the hall, and still he seemed no more than an ordinary man, only somewhat fantastically dressed, in a doublet of black velvet pinked upon scarlet satin under his cloak, a jewel in his ear, with large roses in his shoes, and a kerchief in his hand, which he sometimes pressed against his left side."

"Gracious Heavens!" said Wildrake, coming close up to Everard, and whispering in his ear, with accents which terror rendered tremulous (a mood of mind most unusual to the daring man, who seemed now overcome by it)—"it must have been poor Dick Robison the player, in the very dress in which I have seen him play *Philaster*—ay, and drunk a jolly bottle with him after it at the *Mermaid*! I remember how many frolics we had together and all his little fantastic fashions. He served for his master, Charles, in Mohun's troop, and was murdered



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by this butcher's dog, as I have heard, after surrender, at the battle of Naseby-field."

"Hush! I have heard of the deed," said Everard; "for God's sake hear the man to an end.—Did this visitor speak to thee, my friend?"

"Yes, sir, in a pleasing tone of voice, but somewhat fanciful in the articulation, and like one who is speaking to an audience as from a bar or a pulpit, more than in the voice of ordinary men on ordinary matters. He desired to see Major-General Harrison."

"He did!—and you," said Everard, infected by the spirit of the time, which, as is well known, leaned to credulity upon all matters of supernatural agency,— "what did you do?"

"I went up to the parlour, and related that such a person inquired for him. He started when I told him, and eagerly desired to know the man's dress; but no sooner did I mention his dress, and the jewel in his ear, than he said, 'Begone! tell him I will not admit him to speech of me. Say that I defy him, and will make my defiance good at the great battle in the valley of Armageddon, when the voice of the angel shall call all fowls which fly under the face of heaven to feed on the flesh of the captain and the soldier, the war-horse and his rider. Say to the Evil One, I have power to appeal our conflict even till that day, and that in the front of that fearful day he will again meet with Harrison.' I went back with this answer to the stranger, and his face was writhed into such a deadly frown as a mere human brow hath seldom worn. 'Return to him,' he said, 'and say it is MY HOUR, and that if he come not instantly down to *speaking with me, I will mount the stairs to him. Say that I COMMAND him to descend, by the token that, on the field of Naseby, he did not the work negligently.*'"

"I have heard," whispered Wildrake—who felt more and more strongly the contagion of superstition—"that

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is were blasphemously used by Harrison when my poor friend Dick."

"What happened next?" said Everard. "See that speakest the truth."

"As gospel unexpounded by a steeple-man," said the pendent; "yet truly it is but little I have to say. Now my master come down, with a blank, yet resolved; and when he entered the hall and saw the stranger, he made a pause. The other waved on him as if to follow, and walked out at the portal. My worthy patron seemed as if he were about to follow, yet again paused, when this visitant, be he man or fiend, re-entered, and said, 'Obey thy doom.'

'By pathless march, by greenwood tree,  
It is thy weird to follow me—  
To follow me through the ghastly moonlight—  
To follow me through the shadows of night—  
To follow me, comrade, still art thou bound:  
I conjure thee by the unstanched wound—  
I conjure thee by the last words I spoke,  
When the body slept and the spirit awoke,  
In the very last pangs of the deadly stroke!'

So saying, he stalked out, and my master followed him into the wood.—I followed also at a distance. But when I came up, my master was alone, and bearing himself as you now behold him."

"Thou hast had a wonderful memory, friend," said the Colonel, coldly, "to remember these rhymes in a single recitation—there seems something of practice in all this."

"A single recitation, my honoured sir," exclaimed the Independent—"alack, the rhyme is seldom out of my poor master's mouth, when, as sometimes haps, he is less triumphant in his wrestles with Satan. But it was the first time I ever heard it uttered by another; and, to say truth, he ever seems to repeat it unwillingly, as a

was not indited by.

we heard and  
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shed to have it  
h in such tales.  
d of, man?—why

hate, deadly hate.—I see  
before me, and—see, he  
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in a manner which showed how anxious he was to dis-  
 guise his real feelings from Everard, whom he con-  
 sidered as unlikely to participate them.

He saluted the Colonel with profound ceremony, and  
 talked of the fineness of the evening, which had sum-  
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moned him forth of the Lodge, to take a turn in the Park, and enjoy the favourable weather. He then took Everard by the arm, and walked back with him towards the Lodge, Wildrake and Tomkins following close behind and leading the horses. Everard, desirous to gain some light on these mysterious incidents, endeavoured to come on the subject more than once, by a mode of interrogation, which Harrison (for madmen are very often unwilling to enter on the subject of their mental delusion) parried with some skill, or addressed himself for aid to his steward Tomkins, who was in the habit of being voucher for his master upon all occasions, which led to Desborough's ingenious nickname of Fibbet.

"And wherefore had you your sword drawn, my worthy General," said Everard, "when you were only on an evening walk of pleasure?"

"Truly, excellent Colonel, these are times when men must watch with their loins girded, and their lights burning, and their weapons drawn. The day draweth nigh, believe me or not as you will, that men must watch lest they be found naked and unarmed, when the seven trumpets shall sound, Boot and saddle; and the pipes of Jezer shall strike up, Horse and away."

"True, good General; but methought I saw you making passes, even now, as if you were fighting," said Everard.

"I am of a strange fantasy, friend Everard," answered Harrison; "and when I walk alone, and happen, as but now, to have my weapon drawn, I sometimes, for exercise sake, will practise a thrust against such a tree as that. It is a silly pride men have in the use of weapons. I have been accounted a master of fence and have fought prizes when I was unregenerated, & before I was called to do my part in the great war entering as a trooper into our victorious General's regiment of horse."

## WOODSTOCK.

"Just methought," said Everard, "I heard a weapon  
a with yours?"

"How? a weapon clash with my sword?—How could  
it be, Tomkins?"

"Truly, sir," said Tomkins, "it must have been a  
bough of the tree; they have them of all kinds here,  
and your honour may have pushed against one of them,  
which the Brazilians call iron-wood, a block of which  
being struck with a hammer, saith Purchas, in his pil-  
grimage, ringeth like an anvil."

"Truly, it may be so," said Harrison; "for those  
rulers who are gone, assembled in this their abode of  
pleasure many strange trees and plants, though they  
gathered not of the fruit of that tree which beareth  
twelve manner of fruits, or of those leaves which are for  
the healing of the nations."

Everard pursued his investigation; for he was struck  
with the manner in which Harrison evaded his questions,  
and the dexterity with which he threw his transcendental  
and fanatical notions, like a sort of veil, over the darker  
visions excited by remorse and conscious guilt.

"But," said he, "if I may trust my eyes and ears, I  
cannot but still think that you had a real antagonist.—  
Nay, I am sure I saw a fellow, in a dark-coloured  
jerkyn, retreat through the wood."

"Did you?" said Harrison, with a tone of surprise,  
while his voice faltered in spite of him—"Who could  
he be?—Tomkins, did you see the fellow Colonel Eve-  
nard talks of with the napkin in his hand—the bloody  
napkin which he always pressed to his side?"

This last expression, in which Harrison gave a mark  
different from that which Everard had assigned, but  
corresponding to Tomkins's original description of the  
supposed spectre, had more effect on Everard in confirm-  
ing the steward's story, than anything he had witness-  
ed or heard. The voucher answered the draft upon  
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as promptly as usual, that he had seen such a fellow glide past them into the thicket—that he dared to say he was some deer-stealer, for he had heard they were become very audacious.

"Look ye there now, Master Everard," said Harrison, hurrying from the subject—"Is it not time now that we should lay aside our controversies, and join hand in hand to repairing the breaches of our Zion? Happy and contented were I, my excellent friend, to be a treader of mortar, or a bearer of a hod, upon this occasion, under our great leader, with whom Providence has gone forth in this great national controversy; and truly, so devoutly do I hold by our excellent and victorious General Oliver, whom Heaven long preserve—that were he to command me, I should not scruple to pluck forth of his high place, the man whom they call Speaker, even as I lent a poor hand to pluck down the man whom they called King.—Wherefore, as I know your judgment holdeth with mine on this matter, let me urge unto you lovingly, that we may act as brethren, and build up the breaches, and re-establish the bulwarks of our English Zion, whereby we shall be doubtless chosen as pillars and buttresses, under our excellent Lord-General, for supporting and sustaining the same, and endowed with proper revenues and incomes, both spiritual and temporal, to serve as a pedestal, on which we may stand, seeing that otherwise our foundation will be on the loose sand.—Nevertheless," continued he, his mind again diverging from his views of temporal ambition, into his visions of the Fifth Monarchy, "these things are but vanity in respect of the opening of the book which is sealed; for all things approach speedily towards lightning and thundering, and unloosing of the great dragon from the bottomless pit, wherein he is chained."

*With this mingled strain of earthly politics, and national prediction, Harrison so overpowered Colonel*

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h as to leave him no time to urge him farther on  
ticular circumstances of his nocturnal skirmish,  
ing which it is plain he had no desire to be inter-  
. They now reached the Lodge of Woodstock.

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## CHAP. XV.

*Now the wasted brands do glow,  
While the screech-owl, sounding loud,  
Puts the wretch that lies in woe,  
In remembrance of a shroud.  
Now it is the time of night  
That the graves all gaping wide,  
Every one lets out its sprite,  
In the church-way paths to glide.*

### MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.

EFORE the gate of the palace, the guards were now doubled. Evercard demanded the reason of this from the Corporal, whom he found in the h his soldiers, sitting or sleeping around a great intained at the expense of the carved chairs and , with fragments of which it was furnished.

ay, verily," answered the man, "the *corps-de-* is your worship says, will be harassed to pieces duty ; nevertheless, fear hath gone abroad among no man will mount guard alone. We have in, however, one or two of our outposts from , and elsewhere, and we are to have a relief from to-morrow."

rd continued minute inquiries concerning the ; that were posted within as well as without the and found that, as they had been stationed e eye of Harrison himself, the rules of prudent had been exactly observed in the distribution osts. There remained nothing therefore for



Will

from Will.  
a rencontre.  
The corporal  
orders. The  
in double force.  
the Commissioners  
get speech with

gularly  
stroke; as  
along, he  
the light  
"It is

kind—  
than,  
Nico  
along

They are in their bedroom, forsooth," replied  
"the fellows;" but I think they be not yet un-  
said Everard, "are Colonel Desborough  
Bletson both in the same sleeping apart-  
honours have so chosen it," said the man;  
their secretaries remain upon guard all

the guards all over the house,"  
sense of a tolerably good-  
now how to fall into

are the

is t'  
Will

May

Rankins.

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re—here—here, Master Tomkins, pressing forward, with the same faces which seemed to pervade the Woodstock.

‘Away with you, then,” said Tomkins, his worship—you see he is not in the

“Indeed,” observed Colonel Everard, regularly wan—his features seem writhed with stroke; and though he was talking so far along, he hath not opened his mouth since the light.”

“It is his manner after such visitations.—“Give his honour your arms, Zerkow, to lead him off—I will follow Nicodemus, tarry to wait upon me—it is alone in this mansion.”

“Master Tomkins,” said Everard, “you often as a sharp, intelligent man—you in earnest afraid of anything superior to this house?”

“I would be loath to run the chance, Zerkow, very gravely; “by looking on Master Tomkins, you may form a guess how they have spoken with the dead.” He took his leave. Everard proceeded to the two remaining Commissioners for their sake, chosen to inhabit in company. Preparing for bed as he went into their chamber, he started as the door opened—both rejoiced it was only Everard who entered.

“Hark ye hither,” said Bletson, putting his finger to his lips, “sawest thou ever ass equal to Desborough? He is as big as an ox, and as timorous as a mouse. He insisted on my sleeping here, to protect me. We will have a merry night on’t, ha? We will use the third bed, which was prepared for

## WOODSTOCK.

is gone out, like a moon-calf, to look for the valley of Armageddon in the Park of Woodstock."

"General Harrison has returned with me but now," said Everard.

"Nay but, as I shall live, he comes not into our apartment," said Desborough, overhearing his answer. "No man that has been supping, for aught I know, with the Devil, has a right to sleep among Christian folk."

"He does not propose so," said Everard; "he sleeps, as I understand, apart—and alone."

"Not quite alone, I dare say," said Desborough; "for Harrison hath a sort of attraction for goblins—they fly round him like moths about a candle: But, I prithee, good Everard, do thou stay with us. I know not how it is, but although thou hast not thy religion always in thy mouth, nor speakest many hard words about it, like Harrison—nor makest long preachments, like a certain most honourable relation of mine who shall be nameless, yet somehow I feel myself safer in thy company than with any of them. As for this Bletson, he is such a mere blasphemer, that I fear the Devil will carry him away ere morning."

"Did you ever hear such a paltry coward?" said Bletson, apart to Everard. "Do tarry, however, mine honoured Colonel—I know your zeal to assist the distressed, and you see Desborough is in that predicament, that he will require near him more than one good example to prevent him thinking of ghosts and fiends."

"I am sorry I cannot oblige you, gentlemen," said Everard; "but I have settled my mind to sleep in Victor Lee's apartment, so I wish you good night; and if you *would repose* without disturbance, I would advise that *you commend yourselves, during the watches of the night, to Him unto whom night is even as mid-day. I had intended to have spoken with you this evening on the subject of my being here; but I will defer the con*

## WOODSTOCK.

till to-morrow, when, I think, I will be able to  
on excellent reasons for leaving Woodstock."

have seen plenty such already," said Des-  
1; "for one, I came here to serve the estate,  
me moderate advantage doubtless to myself for  
ible; but if I am set upon my head again to-night,  
s the night before, I would not stay longer to gain  
; crown; for I am sure my neck would be unfitted  
the weight of it."

od night," exclaimed Everard; and was about to  
en Bletson again pressed close, and whispered to  
Hark thee, Colonel—you know my friendship for

do implore thee to leave the door of thy apart-  
pen, that if thou meetest with any disturbance, I  
ar thee call, and be with thee upon the very in-

Do this, dear Everard, my fears for thee will  
e awake else; for I know that, notwithstanding  
cellent sense, you entertain some of those super-  
ideas which we suck in with our mother's milk,  
ich constitute the ground of our fears in situations  
present; therefore leave thy door open, if you  
e, that you may have ready assistance from me in  
need."

r master," said Wildrake, "trusts, first, in his  
sir, and then in his good sword. He has no idea  
e Devil can be baffled by the charm of two men  
n one room, still less that the foul fiend can be  
out of existence by the Nullifidians of the

ard seized his imprudent friend by the collar, and  
d him off as he was speaking, keeping fast hold of  
l they were both in the chamber of Victor Lee,  
they had slept on a former occasion. Even then  
tinued to hold Wildrake, until the servant ha  
d the lights, and was dismissed from the room  
ing him go, addressed him with the upbraid-

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question, "Art thou not a prudent and sagacious person, who in times like these seek'st every opportunity to argue yourself into a broil, or embroil yourself in an argument. Out on you!"

"Ay, out on me, indeed," said the cavalier; "out on me for a poor tame-spirited creature, that submits to be bandied about in this manner, by a man who is neither better born nor better bred than myself. I tell thee, Mark, you make an unfair use of your advantages over me. Why will you not let me go from you, and live and die after my own fashion?"

"Because before we had been a week separate, I should hear of your dying after the fashion of a dog. Come, my good friend, what madness was it in thee to fall foul on Harrison, and then to enter into useless argument with Bletson?"

"Why, we are in the Devil's house, I think, and I would willingly give the landlord his due wherever I travel. To have sent him Harrison, or Bletson now, just as a lunch to stop his appetite, till Crom"—

"Hush! stone walls have ears," said Everard, looking around him. "Here stands thy night-drink. Look to thy arms, for we must be as careful as if the Avenger of Blood were behind us. Yonder is thy bed—and I, as thou seest, have one prepared in the parlour. The door only divides us."

"Which I will leave open, in case thou shouldst holla for assistance, as yonder Nullifidian hath it.—But how hast thou got all this so well put in order, good patron?"

"I gave the steward Tomkins notice of my purpose to sleep here."

"A strange fellow that," said Wildrake, "and, as judge, has taken measure of every one's foot—all ~~se~~ to pass through his hands."

"He is, I have understood," replied Everard,

his sincerity ever been doubted?" said Wildrake.  
"er, that I heard of," said the Colonel; "on the  
r, he has been familiarly called Honest Joe, and  
Tomkins. For my part, I believe his sincerity  
ays kept pace with his interest.—But come  
hy cup, and to bed.—What, all emptied at once  
t?"

zookers, yes—my vow forbids me to make two  
ut, never fear—the nightcap will only warm me  
ot clog it. So, man or devil, give me notice  
: disturbed, and rely on me in a twinkling." S

the cavalier retreated into his separate apart-  
ment and Colonel Everard, taking off the most cum-  
bersome part of his dress, lay down in his hose and doublet  
and imposed himself to rest.

was awakened from sleep by a slow and solemn  
of music, which died away as at a distance. He  
up, and felt for his arms, which he found close

## WOODSTOCK.

out for such. Uncertain whether he had not  
ied of these sounds which seemed yet in his ears,  
as unwilling to risk the raillery of his friend by  
noning him to his assistance. He sat up, therefore,  
is bed, not without experiencing that nervous agita-  
to which brave men as well as cowards are subject ;  
h this difference, that the one sinks under it, like the  
e under the hail-storm, and the other collects his  
ergies to shake it off, as the cedar of Lebanon is said  
elevate its boughs to disperse the snow which accumu-  
ates upon them.

The story of Harrison, in his own absolute despite,  
and notwithstanding a secret suspicion which he had of  
trick or connivance, returned on his mind at this dead  
and solitary hour. Harrison, he remembered, had de-  
scribed the vision by a circumstance of its appearance  
different from that which his own remark had been cal-  
culated to suggest to the mind of the visionary ;—that  
bloody napkin, always pressed to the side, was then a  
circumstance present either to his bodily eye, or to the  
of his agitated imagination. Did, then, the murderer  
revisit the living haunts of those who had forced the  
from the stage with all their sins unaccounted for ? A  
if they did, might not the same permission author  
other visitations of a similar nature, to warn—to instr  
—to punish ? Rash are they, was his conclusion,  
credulous, who receive as truth every tale of the k  
but no less rash may it be, to limit the power o  
Creator over the works which he has made, and to  
pose that, by the permission of the Author of N  
the laws of Nature may not, in peculiar cases, a  
high purposes, be temporarily suspended.

*While these thoughts passed through Everard's  
feelings unknown to him, even when he stood fir  
ough and perilous edge of battle, gained gro  
n. He feared he knew not what ; and whe*

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discernible peril would have drawn out his courage, absolute uncertainty of his situation increased his sense of the danger. He felt an almost irresistible desire to spring from his bed and heap fuel on the dying embers, expecting by the blaze to see some strange sight in his chamber. He was also strongly tempted to awaken Wildrake ; but shame, stronger than fear itself, checked these impulses. What ! should it be thought that Markham Everard, held one of the best soldiers who had drawn a sword in this sad war—Markham Everard, who had obtained such distinguished rank in the army of the Parliament, though so young in years, was afraid of remaining by himself in a twilight room at midnight ? It never should be said.

This was, however, no charm for his unpleasant current of thought. There rushed on his mind the various traditions of Victor Lee's chamber, which, though he had often despised them as vague, unauthenticated, and inconsistent rumours, engendered by ancient superstition, and transmitted from generation to generation by loquacious credulity, had yet something in them, which did not tend to allay the unpleasant state of his nerves. Then, when he recollected the events of that very afternoon, the weapon pressed against his throat, and the strong arm which threw him backward on the floor—if the remembrance served to contradict the idea of flitting phantoms, and unreal daggers, it certainly induced him to believe that there was in some part of this extensive mansion a party of cavaliers, or malignants, harboured, who might arise in the night, overpower the guards, and execute upon them all, but on Harrison in particular, as one of the regicide judges, that vengeance, which was so eagerly thirsted for by the attached followers of the slaughtered monarch.

*He endeavoured to console himself on this subject the number and position of the guards, yet still wa*



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satisfied with himself for not having taken yet more exact precautions, and for keeping an extorted promise of silence, which might consign so many of his party to the danger of assassination. These thoughts, connected with his military duties, awakened another train of reflections. He bethought himself, that all he could now do, was to visit the sentries, and ascertain that they were awake, alert, on the watch, and so situated, that in time of need they might be ready to support each other.—“This better befits me,” he thought, “than to be here like a child, frightening myself with the old woman’s legend, which I have laughed at when a boy. What although old Victor Lee was a sacrilegious man, as common report goes, and brewed ale in the font which he brought from the ancient palace of Holyrood, while church and building were in flames? And what although his eldest son was when a child scalded to death in the same vessel? How many churches have been demolished since his time? How many fonts desecrated? So many indeed, that, were the vengeance of Heaven to visit such aggressions in a supernatural manner, no corner in England, no, not the most petty parish church, but would have its apparition.—Tush, these are idle fancies, unworthy, especially, to be entertained by those educated to believe that sanctity resides in the intention and the act, not in the buildings or fonts, or the form of worship.”

As thus he called together the articles of his Calvinistic creed, the bell of the great clock (a token seldom silent in such narratives) tolled three, and was immediately followed by the hoarse call of the sentinels through vault and gallery, up stairs and beneath, challenging and *answering each other with the usual watchword, “All’s Well.”* Their voices mingled with the deep boom of *the bell, yet ceased before that was silent, and when they* *and died away, the tingling echo of the prolonged knell*

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was scarcely audible. Ere yet that last distant tingling had finally subsided into silence, it seemed as if it again was awakened ; and Everard could hardly judge at first whether a new echo had taken up the falling cadence, or whether some other and separate sound was disturbing anew the silence to which the deep knell had, as its voice ceased, consigned the ancient mansion and the woods around it.

But the doubt was soon cleared up. The musical tones which had mingled with the dying echoes of the knell, seemed at first to prolong, and afterwards to survive them. A wild strain of melody, beginning at a distance, and growing louder as it advanced, seemed to pass from room to room, from cabinet to gallery, from hall to bower, through the deserted and dishonoured ruins of the ancient residence of so many sovereigns ; and, as it approached, no soldier gave alarm, nor did any of the numerous guests of various degrees, who spent an unpleasant and terrified night in that ancient mansion, seem to dare to announce to each other the inexplicable cause of apprehension.

Everard's excited state of mind did not permit him to be so passive. The sounds approached so nigh, that it seemed they were performing, in the very next apartment, a solemn service for the dead, when he gave the alarm, by calling loudly to his trusty attendant and friend Wildrake, who slumbered in the next chamber with only a door betwixt them, and even that ajar.

“ Wildrake—Wildrake !—Up—up ! Dost thou not hear the alarm ? ”

There was no answer from Wildrake, though the musical sounds, which now rung through the apartment, as if the performers had actually been within its precincts, would have been sufficient to awaken a sleeping person, even without the shout of his comrade and patron.

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"Alarm!—Roger Wildrake—alarm!" again called Everard, getting out of bed, and grasping his weapons—"Get a light, and cry alarm!"

There was no answer. His voice died away as the sound of the music seemed also to die; and the same soft sweet voice, which still to his thinking resembled that of Alice Lee, was heard in his apartment, and, as he thought, at no distance from him.

"Your comrade will not answer," said the low soft voice. "Those only hear the alarm whose consciences feel the call!"

"Again this mummary!" said Everard. "I am better armed than I was of late; and but for the sound of that voice, the speaker had bought his trifling dear."

It was singular, we may observe in passing, that the instant the distinct sounds of the human voice were heard by Everard, all idea of supernatural interference was at an end, and the charm by which he had been formerly fettered appeared to be broken; so much is the influence of imaginary or superstitious terror dependent (so far as respects strong judgments at least) upon what is vague or ambiguous; and so readily do distinct tones, and express ideas, bring such judgments back to the current of ordinary life. The voice returned answer, as addressing his thoughts as well as his words.

"We laugh at the weapons thou thinkest should terrify us--Over the guardians of Woodstock they have no power. Fire, if thou wilt, and try the effect of thy weapons. But know, it is not our purpose to harm thee--thou art of a falcon breed, and noble in thy disposition, though, unreclaimed and ill-nurtured, thou hauntest *with kites and carrion crows*. Wing thy flight from *hence on the morrow*, for if thou tarriest with the *bats, owls, vultures, and ravens*, which have thought to *nestle here*, thou wilt inevitably share their fate. Away, thou

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these halls may be swept and garnished for the option of those who have a better right to inhabit them."

Everard answered in a raised voice.—"Once more I warn you, think not to defy me in vain. I am no child to be frightened by goblins' tales ; and no coward, armed as I am, to be alarmed at the threats of banditti. If I give you a moment's indulgence, it is for the sake of dear and misguided friends, who may be concerned with this dangerous gambol. Know, I can bring a troop of soldiers round the castle, who will search its most inward recesses for the author of this audacious frolic ; and if that search should fail, it will cost but a few barrels of gunpowder to make the mansion a heap of ruins, and bury under them the authors of such an ill-judged pastime."

"You speak proudly, Sir Colonel," said another voice, similar to that harsher and stronger tone by which he had been addressed in the gallery ; "try your courage in this direction."

"You should not dare me twice," said Colonel Everard, "had I a glimpse of light to take aim by."

As he spoke, a sudden gleam of light was thrown with a brilliancy which almost dazzled the speaker, showing distinctly a form somewhat resembling that of Victor Lee, as represented in his picture, holding in one hand a lady completely veiled, and in the other his leading-staff, or truncheon. Both figures were animated, and, as it appeared, standing within six feet of him.

"Were it not for the woman," said Everard, "I would not be thus mortally dared."

"Spare not for the female form, but do your worst," replied the same voice. "I defy you."

"Repeat your defiance when I have counted thrice," said Everard, "and take the punishment of your insolence. Once—I have cocked my pistol—Twice—I never missed my aim—By all that is sacred, I fire if you do not"  
Q

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withdraw. When I pronounce the next number, I will shoot you dead where you stand. I am yet unwilling to shed blood—I give you another chance of flight—once—twice—THRICE ! ”

Everard aimed at the bosom, and discharged his pistol. The figure waved its arm in an attitude of scorn ; and a loud laugh arose, during which the light, as gradually growing weaker, danced and glimmered upon the apparition of the aged knight, and then disappeared. Everard's life-blood ran cold to his heart—“ Had he been of human mould,” he thought, “ the bullet must have pierced him—but I have neither will nor power to fight with supernatural beings.”

The feeling of oppression was now so strong as to be actually sickening. He groped his way, however, to the fireside, and flung on the embers, which were yet gleaming, a handful of dry fuel. It presently blazed, and afforded him light to see the room in every direction. He looked cautiously, almost timidly, around, and half expected some horrible phantom to become visible. But he saw nothing save the old furniture, the reading desk, and other articles, which had been left in the same state as when Sir Henry Lee departed. He felt an uncontrollable desire, mingled with much repugnance, to look at the portrait of the ancient knight, which the form he had seen so strongly resembled. He hesitated betwixt the opposing feelings, but at length snatched, with desperate resolution, the taper which he had extinguished, and re-lighted it ere the blaze of the fuel had again died away. He held it up to the ancient portrait of Victor Lee, and gazed on it with eager curiosity, not unmingled with fear. Almost the childish terrors of his earlier days returned, and he thought the severe pale eye of the ancient warrior followed his, and menaced him with displeasure. And although he quickly argued himself out of such an absurd belief, yet the mixed feelings

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and were expressed in words that seemed ha  
sed to the ancient portrait.

soul of my mother's ancestor," he said, "be it fo  
r or for woe, by designing men, or by supernatural  
ings, that these ancient halls are disturbed, I am re  
lved to leave them on the morrow."

"I rejoice to hear it, with all my soul," said a voice  
hind him.

He turned, saw a tall figure in white, with a sort of  
rban upon its head, and dropping the candle in the  
ertion, instantly grappled with it.

"*Thou* at least art palpable," he said.

"Palpable?" answered he whom he grasped so  
ongly—"Sdeath, methinks you might know that  
hout the risk of choking me; and if you loose me  
t, I'll show you that two can play at the game of  
estling."

"Roger Wildrake!" said Everard, letting the cavalier  
se, and stepping back.

'Roger Wildrake? ay, truly. Did you take me for  
er Bacon, come to help you to raise the devil?—for  
place smells of sulphur consumedly."

It is the pistol I fired—Did you not hear it?"

Why, yes, it was the first thing waked me—for that  
cap which I pulled on made me sleep like a dor-  
—Pshaw, I feel my brains giddy with it yet."

nd wherefore came you not on the instant?—I  
eeded help more."

came as fast as I could," answered Wildrake;  
: was some time ere I got my senses collected, for  
reaming of that cursed field at Naseby—and then  
of my room was shut, and hard to open, till I  
he locksmith with my foot."

! it was open when I went to bed," said

locked when I came out of bed, though."

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said Wildrake, "and I marvel you heard me not when I forced it open."

"My mind was occupied otherwise," said Everard.

"Well," said Wildrake, "but what has happened?—Here am I bolt upright, and ready to fight, if this yawning fit will give me leave—Mother Redcap's mightiest is weaker than I drank last night by a bushel to a barley-corn—I have quaffed the very elixir of malt—Ha—yaw."

"And some opiate besides, I should think," said Everard.

"Very like—very like—less than the pistol-shot would not waken me; even me, who, with but an ordinary grace-cup, sleep as lightly as a maiden on the first of May, when she watches for the earliest beam to go to gather dew. But what are you about to do next?"

"Nothing," answered Everard.

"Nothing?" said Wildrake, in surprise.

"I speak it," said Colonel Everard, "less for your information, than for that of others who may hear me, that I will leave the Lodge this morning, and, if it is possible, remove the Commissioners."

"Hark," said Wildrake, "do you not hear some noise like the distant sound of the applause of a theatre? The goblins of the place rejoice in your departure."

"I shall leave Woodstock," said Everard, "to the occupation of my uncle Sir Henry Lee and his family, if they choose to resume it; not that I am frightened into this as a concession to the series of artifices which have been played off on this occasion, but solely because such was my intention from the beginning. But let me warn" (he added, raising his voice)—"let me warn the parties concerned in this combination, that though it may pass off successfully on a fool like Desborough, a vis like Harrison, a coward like Bletson"—  
Here a voice distinctly spoke, as standing near

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rise, moderate, and resolute person like Colonel

Heaven, the voice came from the picture," said he, drawing his sword ; "I will pink his plaited ar for him."

Offer no violence," said Everard, startled at the eruption, but resuming with firmness what he was saying—"Let those engaged be aware, that however his string of artifices may be immediately successful, it must, when closely looked into, be attended with the punishment of all concerned—the total demolition of Woodstock, and the irremediable downfall of the family of Lee. Let all concerned think of this, and desist in time."

He paused, and almost expected a reply, but none such came.

"It is a very odd thing," said Wildrake ; "but yaw-ha—my brain cannot compass it just now ; it whirls round like a toast in a bowl of muscadine ; I must sit down—ha-yaw—and discuss it at leisure—Gramercy, good elbow-chair."

So saying, he threw himself, or rather sank gradually down on a large easy-chair which had been often pressed by the weight of stout Sir Henry Lee, and in an instant was sound asleep. Everard was far from feeling the same inclination for slumber, yet his mind was relieved of the apprehension of any farther visitation that night ; for he considered his treaty to evacuate Woodstock as made known to, and accepted in all probability by, those whom the intrusion of the Commissioners had induced to take such singular measures for expelling them. His opinion, which had for a time bent towards a belief in something supernatural in the disturbances, had now returned to the more rational mode of accounting for them by dexterous combination, for which such a mansion as Woodstock afforded so many facilities.



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He heaped the hearth with fuel, lighted the candle, and examining poor Wildrake's situation, adjusted him as easily in the chair as he could, the cavalier stirring his limbs no more than an infant. His situation went far, in his patron's opinion, to infer trick and confederacy, for ghosts have no occasion to drug men's possets. He threw himself on the bed, and while he thought these strange circumstances over, a sweet and low strain of music stole through the chamber, the words "Good night—good night—good night," thrice repeated, each time in a softer and more distant tone, seeming to assure him that the goblins and he were at truce, if not at peace, and that he had no more disturbance to expect that night. He had scarcely the courage to call out a "good night ;" for, after all his conviction of the existence of a trick, it was so well performed as to bring with it a feeling of fear, just like what an audience experience during the performance of a tragic scene, which they know to be unreal, and which yet effects their passions by its near approach to nature. Sleep overtook him at last, and left him not till broad daylight on the ensuing morning.

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## CHAP. XVI.

*And yonder shines Aurora's harbinger,  
At whose approach ghosts, wandering here and there,  
Troop home to churchyard.*

### MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.

 WITH the fresh air and the rising of the morning every feeling of the preceding night had passed away from Colonel's Everard's mind, except wonder how the effects which he had witnessed could be produced. He examined the whole room, ~~some~~ bolt, floor, and wainscot with his knuckles and ~~was~~ unable to discern any secret passages; w

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, secured by a strong cross-bolt, with the lock-bolt, remained as firm as when he had fastened it on the preceding evening. The apparition resembling Victor Lee next called his attention. Ridiculous stories had been often circulated, of this figure, or one exactly resembling it, having been met with by night among the waste apartments and corridors of the old palace ; and Markham Everard had often heard such in his childhood. He was angry to recollect his own deficiency of courage, and the thrill which he felt on the preceding night, when, by confederacy doubtless, such an object was placed before his eyes.

“ Surely,” he said, “ this fit of childish folly could not make me miss my aim—more likely that the bullet had been withdrawn clandestinely from my pistol.”

He examined that which was undischarged—he found the bullet in it. He investigated the apartment opposite to the point at which he had fired, and, at five feet from the floor in a direct line between the bed-side and the place where the appearances had been seen, a pistol-ball had recently buried itself in the wainscot. He had little doubt, therefore, that he had fired in a just direction ; and indeed, to have arrived at the place where it was lodged, the bullet must have passed through the appearance at which he aimed, and proceeded point blank to the wall beyond. This was mysterious, and induced him to doubt whether the art of witchcraft or conjuration had not been called in to assist the machinations of those daring conspirators, who, being themselves mortal, might, nevertheless, according to the universal creed of the times, have invoked and obtained assistance from the inhabitants of another world.

His next investigation respected the picture of Victor Lee *itself*. He examined it minutely as he stood on the floor before it, and compared its pale, shadowy, faintly traced outlines, its faded colours, the stern repose of

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eye, and death-like pallidness of the countenance, with its different aspect on the preceding night, when illuminated by the artificial light which fell full upon it, while it left every other part of the room in comparative darkness. The features seemed then to have an unnatural glow, while the rising and falling of the flame in the chimney gave the head and limbs something which resembled the appearance of actual motion. Now, seen by day, it was a mere picture of the hard and ancient school of Holbein ; last night, it seemed for the moment something more. Determined to get to the bottom of this contrivance if possible, Everard, by the assistance of a table and chair, examined the portrait still more closely, and endeavoured to ascertain the existence of any private spring, by which it might be slipt aside,—a contrivance not unfrequent in ancient buildings, which usually abounded with means of access and escape, communicated to none but the lords of the castle, or their immediate confidants. But the panel on which Victor Lee was painted was firmly fixed in the wainscoting of the apartment, of which it made a part, and the Colonel satisfied himself that it could not have been used for the purpose which he had suspected.

He next aroused his faithful squire, Wildrake, who, notwithstanding his deep share of the "blessedness of sleep," had scarce even yet got rid of the effects of the grace-cup of the preceding evening. "It was the reward," according to his own view of the matter, "of his temperance ; one single draught having made him sleep more late and more sound than a matter of half-a-dozen, or from thence to a dozen pulls, would have done, when *he was guilty of the enormity of rere-suppers,\* and of drinking deep after them.*"

"Had your temperate draught," said Everard, "been but a thought more strongly seasoned, Wildrake, tho

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**"I slept so sound that the last trump only could have waked thee."**

**"And then," answered Wildrake, "I should have waked with a headache, Mark ; for I see my modest sip was not exempted me from that epilogue.—But let us go forth, and see how the night, which we have passed so strangely, has been spent by the rest of them. I suspect they are all right willing to evacuate Woodstock, unless they have either rested better than we, or at least been more lucky in lodgings."**

**"In that case, I will despatch thee down to Joceline's hut, to negotiate the re-entrance of Sir Henry Lee and his family into their old apartments, where, my interest with the General being joined with the indifferent repute of the place itself, I think they have little chance of being disturbed either by the present, or by any new Commissioners."**

**"But how are they to defend themselves against the fiends, my gallant Colonel?" said Wildrake. "Methinks had I an interest in yonder pretty girl, such as thou dost boast, I should be loath to expose her to the terrors of a residence at Woodstock, where these devils—I beg their pardon, for I suppose they hear every word we say—these merry goblins—make such gay work from twilight till morning."**

**"My dear Wildrake," said the Colonel, "I, as well as you, believe it possible that our speech may be overheard ; but I care not, and will speak my mind plainly. I trust Sir Henry and Alice are not engaged in this silly plot ; I cannot reconcile it with the pride of the one, the modesty of the other, or the good sense of both, that any motive could engage them in so strange a conjunction. But the fiends are all of your own political persuasion, Wildrake, all true-blue cavaliers and I am convinced, that Sir Henry and Alice Le though they be unconnected with them, have not**

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slightest cause to be apprehensive of their goblin machinations. Besides, Sir Henry and Joceline must know every corner about the place : it will be far more difficult to play off any ghostly machinery upon him than upon strangers. But let us to our toilet, and when water and brush have done their work, we will inquire what is next to be done."

"Nay, that wretched puritan's garb of mine is hardly worth brushing," said Wildrake ; "and but for this hundredweight of rusty iron, with which thou hast bedizened me, I look more like a bankrupt Quaker than anything else. But I'll make *you* as spruce as ever was a canting rogue of your party."

So saying, and humming at the same time the cavalier tune,—

Though for a time we see Whitehall  
With cobwebs hung around the wall,  
Yet Heaven shall make amends for all,  
When the King shall enjoy his own again.—

"Thou forgettest who are without," said Colonel Everard.

"No—I remember who are within," replied his friend. "I only sing to my merry goblins, who will like me all the better for it. Tush, man, the devils are my *bonos socios*, and when I see them, I will warrant they prove such roaring boys as I knew when I served under Lunford and Goring, fellows with long nails that nothing escaped, bottomless stomachs, that nothing filled,—mad for pillaging, ranting, drinking, and fighting,—sleeping rough on the trenches, and dying stubbornly in their boots. Ah ! those merry days are gone. Well, it is *the fashion to make a grave face on't among cavaliers, and specially the parsons that have lost their tithe-pigs ; but I was fitted for the element of the time, and never did or can desire merrier days than I had*

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during that same barbarous, bloody, and unnatural rebellion."

"Thou wert ever a wild sea-bird, Roger, even according to your name; liking the gale better than the calm, the boisterous ocean better than the smooth lake, and your rough, wild struggle against the wind, than daily food, ease, and quiet."

"Pshaw! a fig for your smooth lake, and your old woman to feed me with brewer's grains, and the poor drake obliged to come swattering whenever she whistles! Everard, I like to feel the wind rustle against my pinions,—now diving, now on the crest of the wave, now in ocean, now in sky—that is the wildrake's joy, my grave one! And in the Civil War so it went with us—down in one county, up in another, beaten to-day, victorious to-morrow—now starving in some barren leaguer—now revelling in a Presbyterian's pantry—his cellars, his plate-chest, his old judicial thumb-ring, his pretty serving-wench, all at command!"

"Hush, friend," said Everard; "remember I hold that persuasion."

"More the pity, Mark, more the pity," said Wildrake; "but, as you say, it is needless talking of it. Let us e'en go and see how your Presbyterian pastor, Mr. Holdenough, has fared, and whether he has been proved more able to foil the foul fiend than have you his disciple and auditor."

They left the apartment accordingly, and were overwhelmed with the various incoherent accounts of sentinels and others, all of whom had seen or heard something extraordinary in the course of the night. It is needless to describe particularly the various rumours which each contributed to the common stock, with the *greater alacrity* that in such cases there seems always to be a sort of disgrace in not having seen or suffered as much as others.

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The most moderate of the narrators only talked of sounds like the mewling of a cat, or the growling of a dog, especially the squeaking of a pig. They heard also as if it had been nails driven and saws used, and the clashing of fetters, and the rustling of silk gowns, and the notes of music, and in short all sorts of sounds, which have nothing to do with each other. Others swore they had smelt savours of various kinds, chiefly bituminous, indicating a Satanic derivation; others did not indeed swear, but protested, to visions of men in armour. horses without heads, asses with horns, and cows with six legs, not to mention black figures, whose cloven hoofs gave plain information what realm they belonged to.

But these strongly-attested cases of nocturnal disturbances among the sentinels had been so general as to prevent alarm and succour on any particular point, so that those who were on duty called in vain on the *corps-de-garde*, who were trembling on their own post; and an alert enemy might have done complete execution on the whole garrison. But amid this general *alerte*, no violence appeared to be meant, and annoyance, not injury, seemed to have been the goblins' object, excepting in the case of one poor fellow, a trooper, who had followed Harrison in half his battles, and now was sentinel in that very vestibule upon which Everard had recommended them to mount a guard. He had presented his carabine at something which came suddenly upon him, when it was wrested out of his hands, and he himself knocked down with the butt-end of it. His broken head, and the drenched bedding of Desborough, upon whom a tub of ditch-water had been emptied during his sleep, were the *only pieces of real evidence* to attest the disturbances of the night.

The report from Harrison's apartments were, as delivered by the grave Master Tomkins, that truly the

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Amiel had passed the night undisturbed, though there was still upon him a deep sleep, and a folding of the hands to slumber ; from which Everard argued that the machinators had esteemed Harrison's part of the reckoning sufficiently paid off on the preceding evening.

He then proceeded to the apartment doubly garrisoned by the worshipful Desborough and the philosophical Bletson. They were both up and dressing themselves ; the former open-mouthed in his feelings of fear and suffering. Indeed, no sooner had Everard entered, than the ducked and dismayed Colonel made a dismal complaint of the way he had spent the night, and murmured not a little against his worshipful kinsman for imposing a task upon him which inferred so much annoyance.

" Could not his Excellency, my kinsman Noll," he said, " have given his poor relative and brother-in-law a sop somewhere else than out of this Woodstock, which seems to be the devil's own porridge-pot ? I cannot sup broth with the devil ; I have no long spoon—not I. Could he not have quartered me in some quiet corner, and given this haunted place to some of his preachers and prayers, who know the Bible as well as the muster-roll ? whereas I know the four hoofs of a clean-going nag, or the points of a team of oxen, better than all the books of Moses. But I will give it over at once and for ever ; hopes of earthly gain shall never make me run the risk of being carried away bodily by the devil, besides being set upon my head one whole night, and soused with ditch-water the next—No, no ; I am too wise for that."

Master Bletson had a different part to act. He complained of no personal annoyances : on the contrary, he declared he should have slept as well as ever he did in his life, but for the abominable disturbances around him of men calling to arms every half-hour, when so much



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a cat trotted by one of their posts—He would rather, he said, "have slept among a whole sabaoth of witches, if such creatures could be found."

"Then you think there are no such things as apparitions, Master Bletson?" said Everard. "I used to be sceptical on the subject; but, on my life, to-night has been a strange one."

"Dreams, dreams, dreams, my simple Colonel," said Bletson, though his pale face and shaking limbs belied the assumed courage with which he spoke. "Old Chaucer, sir, has told us the real moral on't—He was an old frequenter of the forest of Woodstock, here"—

"Chaser?" said Desborough; "some huntsman, belike, by his name. Does he walk like Hearne at Windsor?"

"Chaucer," said Bletson, "my dear Desborough; is one of those wonderful fellows, as Colonel Everard knows, who live many a hundred years after they are buried, and whose words haunt our ears after their bones are long mouldered in the dust."

"Ay, ay! well!" answered Desborough, to whom this description of the old poet was unintelligible—"I for one desire his room rather than his company; one of your conjurors, I warrant him. But what says he to the matter?"

"Only a slight spell, which I will take the freedom to repeat to Colonel Everard," said Bletson; "but which would be as bad as Greek to thee, Desborough. Old Geoffrey lays the whole blame of our nocturnal disturbance on superfluity of humours,

Which causen folke to dred in their dreams  
Of arrowes, and of fire with red gleams,  
*Right as the humour of Melancholy*  
*Causeth many a man in sleep to cry*  
*For fear of great bulls and bears black,*  
*And others that black devils will them take.*

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As he was thus declaiming, Everard observed a stick sticking out from beneath the pillow of the bed occupied by the honourable member.

"Is that Chaucer?" he said, making to the volume; would like to look at the passage"—

"Chaucer?" said Bletson, hastening to interfere; "no—that is Lucretius, my darling Lucretius. I cannot let you see it; I have some private marks."

But by this time Everard had the book in his hand. "Lucretius?" he said; "no, Master Bletson—this is not Lucretius, but a fitter comforter in dread or in danger—Why should you be ashamed of it? Only, Bletson, instead of resting your head, if you can but anchor your heart upon this volume, it may serve you in better stead than Lucretius or Chaucer either."

"Why, what book is it?" said Bletson, his pale cheek colouring with the shame of detection. "Oh! the Bible!" throwing it down contemptuously; "some book of my fellow Gibeon's; these Jews have been always superstitious—ever since Juvenal's time—thou knowest—

*Qualiacunque voles Judæi somnia vendunt.*

He left me the old book for a spell, I warrant you; for 'tis a well-meaning fool."

"He would scarce have left the New Testament as well as the Old," said Everard. "Come, my dear Bletson, do not be ashamed of the wisest thing you ever did in your life, supposing you took your Bible in an hour of apprehension, with a view to profit by the contents."

Bletson's vanity was so much galled that it overcame his constitutional cowardice. His little thin fingers quivered for eagerness, his neck and cheeks were as red as scarlet, and his articulation was as thick and vehement as—in short, as if he had been no philosopher.

"Master Everard," he said, "you are a man of the sword, sir; and, sir, you seem to suppose yourself entire"

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to say whatever comes into your mind with respect to civilians, sir. But I would have you remember, sir, that there are bounds beyond which human patience may be urged, sir—and jests which no man of honour will endure, sir—and, therefore, I expect an apology for your present language, Colonel Everard, and this unmannerly jesting, sir—or you may chance to hear from me in a way that will not please you."

Everard could not help smiling at this explosion of valour, engendered by irritated self-love.

"Look you, Master Bletson," he said, "I have been a soldier, that is true, but I was never a bloody-minded one; and, as a Christian, I am unwilling to enlarge the kingdom of darkness by sending a new vassal thither before his time. If Heaven gives you time to repent, I see no reason why my hand should deprive you of it, which, were we to have a rencontre, would be your fate in the thrust of a sword, or the pulling of a trigger—I therefore prefer to apologise; and I call Desborough, if he has recovered his wits, to bear evidence that I *do* apologise for having suspected you, who are completely the slave of your own vanity, of any tendency, however slight, towards grace or good sense. And I farther apologise for the time that I have wasted in endeavouring to wash an Ethiopian white, or in recommending rational inquiry to a self-willed atheist."

Bletson, overjoyed at the turn the matter had taken—for the defiance was scarce out of his mouth ere he began to tremble for the consequences—answered with great eagerness and servility of manner,—“Nay, dearest Colonel, say no more of it—an apology is all that is necessary among men of honour—it neither leaves dishonour with him who asks it, nor infers degradation on *him who makes it.*”

“Not such an apology as I have made, I trust,” said the Colonel.

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"No, no—not in the least," answered Bletson—"one apology serves me just as well as another, and Desborough will bear witness you have made one, and that is all there can be said on the subject."

"Master Desborough, and you," rejoined the Colonel, "will take care how the matter is reported, I dare say; and I only recommend to both, that, if mentioned at all, it may be told correctly."

"Nay, nay, we will not mention it at all," said Bletson; "we will forget it from this moment. Only, never suppose me capable of superstitious weakness. Had I been afraid of an apparent and real danger—why such fear is natural to man—and I will not deny that the mood of mind may have happened to me as well as to others. But to be thought capable of resorting to spells, and sleeping with books under my pillow to secure myself against ghosts,—on my word, it was enough to provoke one to quarrel, for the moment, with his very best friend.—And now, Colonel, what is to be done, and how is our duty to be executed at this accursed place? If I should get such a wetting as Desborough's, why I should die of catarrh, though you see it hurts him no more than a bucket of water thrown over a post-horse. You are, I presume, a brother in our commission,—how are you of opinion we should proceed?"

"Why, in good time here comes Harrison," said Everard, "and I will lay my commission from the Lord-General before you all; which, as you see, Colonel Desborough, commands you to desist from acting on your present authority, and intimates his pleasure accordingly, that you withdraw from this place."

Desborough took the paper and examined the signature.—"It is Noll's signature sure enough," said he, *dropping his under jaw*; "only, every time of late he has made the *Oliver* as large as a giant, while the *Cromwell* creeps after like a dwarf, as if the surname were like to

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of these days altogether. But is his kinsman, Noll Cromwell (since he has) so unreasonable as to think his relations are to be set upon their heads till they are in their neck—drenched as if they had in a horse-pond—frightened, day and sort of devils, witches, and fairies, and any of smart-money? Adzooks (forgive me), if that's the case I had better home to d mind team and herd, than dangle after a less person, though I *have* wived his sister. or enough when I took her, for as high as his head now."

ot my purpose," said Bletson, "to stir debate ourable meeting; and no one will doubt the n and attachment which I bear to our nobl whom the current of events, and his own qualities of courage and constancy, ha so high in these deplorable days.—If I were im a direct and immediate emanation of *is Mundi* itself—something which Nature ced in her proudest hour, while exerting her her law, for the preservation of the creature she has given existence—I should scarce ex' ideas which I entertain of him. Always prote

I am by no means to be held as admittin ely as granting for the sake of argument, or e existence of that species of emanation, or n, from the *Animus Mundi*, of which I hav ention. I appeal to you, Colonel Desborou e his Excellency's relation—to you, Colonel o hold the dearer title of his friend, whethe rrated my zeal in his behalf?"

verard bowed at this pause, but Desboro complete authentication. "Nay, ss to that. I have seen when you we

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oints or brush his cloak, or the like—and to be thus ungratefully—and gudgeoned of the oppor-  
s which had been given you "——

It is not for that," said Bletson, waving his hand  
efully. "You do me wrong, Master Desborough——

I do indeed, kind sir—although I know you meant it  
it—No, sir,—no partial consideration of private in-

terest prevailed on me to undertake this charge. It was  
conferred on me by the Parliament of England, in whose  
name this war commenced, and by the Council of State,  
who are the conservators of England's liberty. And the  
chance and serene hope of serving the country, the con-  
fidence that I—and you, Master Desborough—and you,  
worthy General Harrison—superior, as I am, to all  
selfish considerations—to which I am sure you also,  
good Colonel Everard, would be superior, had you been  
named in this Commission, as I would to Heaven  
you had—I say the hope of serving the country, with  
the aid of such respectable associates, one and all of  
them—as well as you, Colonel Everard, supposing you  
to have been of the number, induced me to accept of  
this opportunity, whereby I might, gratuitously, with  
your assistance, render so much advantage to our dear  
mother the Commonwealth of England.—Such was my  
hope—my trust—my confidence. And now comes my  
Lord-General's warrant to dissolve the authority by  
which we are entitled to act. Gentlemen, I ask this  
honourable meeting (with all respect to his Excellency),  
whether his commission be paramount to that from  
which he himself directly holds *his* commission. No  
one will say so. I ask whether he has climbed into the  
seat from which the late Man descended, or hath a great  
seal, or means to proceed by prerogative in such a case?

*I cannot see reason to believe it, and therefore I must  
resist such doctrine. I am in your judgment, my brave  
and honourable colleagues ; but, touching my own poor*

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opinion, I feel myself under the unhappy necessity of proceeding in our commission, as if the interruption had not taken place ; with this addition that the Board of Sequestrators should sit, by day, at this same Lodge of Woodstock, but that, to reconcile the minds of weak brethren, who may be afflicted by superstitious rumours, as well as to avoid any practice on our persons by the malignants, who, I am convinced, are busy in this neighbourhood, we should remove our sittings after sunset to the George Inn, in the neighbouring borough."

"Good Master Bletson," replied Colonel Everard, "it is not for me to reply to you ; but you may know in what characters this army of England and their General write their authority. I fear me the annotation on this precept of the General, will be expressed by the march of a troop of horse from Oxford to see it executed. I believe there are orders out for that effect ; and you know, by late experience, that the soldier will obey his General equally against King and Parliament."

"That obedience is conditional," said Harrison, starting fiercely up: "Know'st thou not, Markham Everard, that I have followed the man Cromwell as close as the bull-dog follows his master?—and so I will yet ;—but I am no spaniel, either to be beaten, or to have the food I have earned snatched from me, as if I were a vile cur, whose wages are a whipping, and free leave to wear my own skin. I looked, amongst the three of us, that we might honestly, and piously, and with advantage to the Commonwealth, have gained out of this commission three, or it may be five thousand pounds. And does Cromwell imagine I will part with it for a rough word? No man goeth a warfare on *his own charges*. He that serves the altar must live by *the altar*—and the saints must have means to provide *them with good harness* and fresh horses against the *resealing* and the pouring forth. Does Cromwell think

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am so much of a tame tiger as to permit him to rend from me at pleasure the miserable dole he hath thrown me? Of a surety I will resist; and the men who are here, being chiefly of my own regiment—men who wait and who expect, with lamps burning and loins girded, and each one his weapon bound upon his thigh, will aid me to make this house good against every assault—ay, even against Cromwell himself, until the latter coming—Selah! Selah! ”——

“And I,” said Desborough, “will levy troops and protect your out-quarters, not choosing at present to close myself up in garrison ”——

“And I,” said Bletson, “will do my part, and hie me to town and lay the matter before Parliament, arising in my place for that effect.”

Everard was little moved by all these threats. The only formidable one, indeed, was that of Harrison, whose enthusiasm, joined with his courage, and obstinacy; and character among the fanatics of his own principles, made him a dangerous enemy. Before trying any arguments with the refractory Major-General, Everard endeavoured to moderate his feelings, and threw something in about the late disturbances.

“Talk not to me of supernatural disturbances, young man—talk not to me of enemies in the body or out of the body. Am I not the champion chosen and commissioned to encounter and to conquer the Great Dragon, and the Beast which cometh out of the sea? Am I not to command the left wing, and two regiments of the centre, when the saints shall encounter with the countless legions of Gog and Magog? I tell thee that my name is written on the sea of glass mingled with fire, and that I will keep this place of Woodstock against all mortal men, and against all devils, whether in field or chamber, in the forest or in the meadow, even till the Saints reign in the fulness of their glory.”



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Everard saw it was then time to produce two or three ones under Cromwell's hand, which he had received from the General, subsequently to the communication through Wildrake. The information they contained was calculated to allay the disappointment of the Commissioners. This document assigned as the reason of superseding the Woodstock Commission, that he should probably propose to the Parliament to require the assistance of General Harrison, Colonel Desborough, and Master Bletson, the honourable member for Littlefaith, in a much greater matter, namely, the disposing of the royal property, and disparking of the King's forest at Windsor. So soon as this idea was started, all parties pricked up their ears; and their drooping, and gloomy, and vindictive looks began to give place to courteous smiles, and to a cheerfulness, which laughed in their eyes, and turned their moustaches upwards.

Colonel Desborough acquitted his right honourable and excellent cousin and kinsman of all species of unkindness; Master Bletson discovered, that the interest of the state was trebly concerned in the good administration of Windsor more than in that of Woodstock. As for Harrison, he exclaimed, without disguise or hesitation, that the gleaning of the grapes of Windsor was better than the vintage of Woodstock. Thus speaking, the glance of his dark eye expressed as much triumph in the proposed earthly advantage, as if it had not been, according to his vain persuasion, to be shortly exchanged for his share in the general reign of the Millennium. His delight, in short, resembled the joy of a eagle, who preys upon a lamb in the evening with *not the less relish, because she descries in the distant landscape a hundred thousand men about to join battle at daybreak, and to give her an endless feast on the blood and lifeblood of the valiant.*

*Yet though all agreed that they would be obeyed*

## WOODSTOCK.

oral's pleasure in this matter, Bletson proposed, a precautionary measure, in which all agreed, that should take up their abode for some time in the town of Woodstock, to wait for their new commissions respecting Windsor; and this upon the prudential consideration, that it was best not to slip one knot until another was first tied.

Each commissioner, therefore, wrote to Oliver individually, stating, in his own way, the depth and height, length and breadth, of his attachment to him. Each expressed himself resolved to obey the General's injunctions to the uttermost; but with the same scrupulous devotion to the Parliament, each found himself at a loss how to lay down the commission intrusted to them by that body, and therefore felt bound in conscience to take up his residence at the borough of Woodstock, that he might not seem to abandon the charge committed to them, until they should be called to administrate the weightier matter of Windsor, to which they expressed their willingness instantly to devote themselves, according to his Excellency's pleasure.

This was the general style of their letters, varied by the characteristic flourishes of the writers. Desborough, for example, said something about the religious duty of providing for one's own household, only he blundered the text. Bletson wrote long and big words about the political obligation incumbent on every member of the community, on every person, to sacrifice his time and talents to the service of his country; while Harrison talked of the littleness of present affairs, in comparison of the approaching tremendous change of all things beneath the sun. But although the garnishing of the various epistles was different, the result came to the same, that they were determined at least to keep sight of Woodstock, until they were well assured of a better and more profitable commission.



## WOODSTOCK.

etter in the most grateful terms  
and probably have been less warm  
inctly than his follower chose to  
n under which the wily General  
.. He acquainted his Excellency  
ntinuing at Woodstock, partly to  
motions of the three Commis-  
whether they did not again enter  
the trust, which they had for the  
and partly to see that some extra-  
ces, which had taken place in the  
ould doubtless transpire, were not  
xplosion to the disturbance of the  
knew (as he expressed himself) that  
so much the friend of order, that he  
urbances or insurrections were pre-  
ad ; and he conjured the General to  
in his exertions for the public service  
thin his power ; not aware, it will be  
peculiar sense his general pledge might

being made up into a packet, were  
dsor by a trooper, detached on tha'

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## CHAP. XVII

*ur zeal,  
ments are afraid to answer.—ANONYMO*

ie Commissioners were preparing  
emselves from the Lodge to the in  
gh of Woodstock, with all that s  
ttend the movements of great per  
ch to whom greatness is not e  
eld some colloquy with the '

## WOODSTOCK.

man, Master Holdenough, who had his apartment which he had occupied, as if of the spirits by whom the mansion was to be disturbed, and whose pale cheek, and low, gave token that he had not passed so comfortably than the other inmates of the Woodstock. Colonel Everard, having assured the reverend gentleman some refreshment, gave this reply :—"This day shall I not taste of that which we are assured of as sufficient sustenance, where it is promised that our bread shall be given us, and our water shall be sure. Not that I am in the papistical opinion that it adds to those which are but an accumulation of filthy rags ; but because I hold it needful that no grosser superstition should this day cloud my understanding, or render less pure and vivid the thanks I owe to Heaven for my wonderful preservation."

"Master Holdenough," said Everard, "you know, both a good man and a bold one, and I last night courageously go upon your sacrifice when soldiers, and tried ones, seemed considerably alarmed."

"Too courageous—too venturous," was Master Holdenough's reply, the boldness of whose aspect was completely to have died away. "We are frail creatures, Master Everard, and frailest when we think ourselves strongest. Oh, Colonel Everard," he added, with a pause, and as if the confidence was partly in vain, "I have seen that which I shall never survive !"

"You surprise me, reverend sir," said Everard, "may I request you will speak more plainly ? I have heard some stories of this wild night, nay, I have witnessed strange things myself ; but, methinks I should be much interested in knowing the nature of the disturbance."

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"Sir," said the clergyman, "you are a discreet gentleman; and though I would not willingly that these heretics, schismatics, Brownists, Muggletonians, Anabaptists, and so forth, had such an opportunity of triumph, as my defeat in this matter would have afforded them, yet with you, who have been ever a faithful follower of our Church, and are pledged to the good cause by the great National League and Covenant, surely I would be more open. Sit we down, therefore, and let me call for a glass of pure water, for as yet I feel some bodily faltering; though, I thank Heaven, I am in mind resolute and composed as a merely mortal man may after such a vision.—They say, worthy Colonel, that looking on such things foretells, or causes, speedy death—I know not if it be true; but if so, I only depart like the tired sentinel when his officer releases him from his post; and glad shall I be to close these wearied eyes against the sight, and shut these harassed ears against the croaking, as of frogs, of Antinomians, and Pelagians, and Socinians, and Arminians, and Arians, and Nullifidians, which have come up into our England, like those filthy reptiles into the house of Pharaoh."

Here one of the servants, who had been summoned, entered with a cup of water, gazing at the same time in the face of the clergyman, as if his stupid grey eyes were endeavouring to read what tragic tale was written on his brow; and shaking his empty skull as he left the room, with the air of one who was proud of having discovered that all was not exactly right, though he could not so well guess what was wrong.

Colonel Everard invited the good man to take some refreshment more genial than the pure element, but he declined: "I am in some sort a champion," he said; "and though I have been foiled in the late controversy with the Enemy, still I have my trumpet to give the alarm, and my sharp sword to smite withal; therefore

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"Nazarites of old, I will eat nothing that cometh of vine, neither drink wine nor strong drink, until my days of combat shall have passed away."

ly and respectfully the Colonel anew pressed Mr Holdenough to communicate the events that had been him on the preceding night ; and the good myman proceeded as follows, with that little characteristic touch of vanity in his narrative, which naturally came out of the part he had played in the world, and the influence which he had exercised over the minds of others. "I was a young man at the University of Cambridge," he said, "when I was particularly bound in friendship to a fellow-student, perhaps because we were esteemed enough it is vain to mention it) the most hopeful scholars in our college ; and so equally advanced, that it was difficult, perhaps, to say which was the greater proficient in studies. Only our tutor, Master Purefoy, used to say that if my comrade had the advantage of me in mathematics, I had the better of him in grace ; for he was attached to the profane learning of the classics, always unprofitable, often impious and impure ; and I had light enough to turn my studies into the sacred tongues. Also we differed in our opinions touching the Church of England, he held Arminian opinions, with Laud, and those who would connect our ecclesiastical establishment with the Pope, and make the church dependent on the breath of a worldly man. In fine, he favoured Prelacy both in essentials and ceremonies ; and although we parted with tears and embraces, it was to follow very different courses. He obtained a living, and became a great controversial writer in behalf of the Bishops and of the Court. I, as is well known to you, to the best of my poor abilities, sharpened my pen in the cause of the poor oppressed people, whose tender consciences rejected the rites and ceremonies more befitting a papistical than a reformed Church, and which, according to the blind  
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policy of the Court, were enforced by pains and penalties. Then came the Civil War, and I—called thereunto by my conscience, and nothing fearing or suspecting what miserable consequences have chanced through the rise of these Independents—consented to lend my countenance and labour to the great work, by becoming chaplain to Colonel Harrison's regiment. Not that I mingled with carnal weapons in the field—which Heaven forbid that a minister of the altar should—but I preached, exhorted, and, in time of need, was a surgeon, as well to the wounds of the body as of the soul. Now, it fell, towards the end of the war, that a party of malignants had seized on a strong house in the shire of Shrewsbury, situated on a small island, advanced into a lake, and accessible only by a small and narrow causeway. From thence they made excursions, and vexed the country; and high time it was to suppress them, so that a part of our regiment went to reduce them; and I was requested to go, for they were few in number to take in so strong a place, and the Colonel judged that my exhortations would make them do valiantly. And so, contrary to my wont, I went forth with them, even to the field, where there was valiant fighting on both sides. Nevertheless, the malignants shooting their wall-pieces at us, had so much the advantage, that, after bursting their gates with a salvo of our cannon, Colonel Harrison ordered his men to advance on the causeway, and try to carry the place by storm. Natheless, although our men did valiantly, advancing in good order, yet being galled on every side by the fire, they at length fell into disorder, and were retreating with much loss, Harrison himself valiantly bringing up the rear, and defending them as he could against the enemy, who sallied forth in pursuit of them, to smite them hip and thigh. Now, Colonel Everard, I am a man of a quick and vehement temper by nature, though better teaching than the old law hath made me mild and patient.

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**W**hen I see me. I could not bear to see our Israelites  
are the Philistines, so I rushed upon the cause-  
n the Bible in one hand, and a halberd, which I  
ight up, in the other, and turned back the fore-  
ugitives, by threatening to strike them down,  
ng out to them at the same time a priest in his  
ck, as they call it, who was among the malignants,  
asking them whether they would not do as much for  
rue servant of Heaven, as the uncircumcised would for  
priest of Baal. My words and strokes prevailed ; they  
urned at once, and shouting out, Down with Baal and  
is worshippers ! they charged the malignants so unex-  
ectedly home, that they not only drove them back into  
heir house of garrison, but entered it with them, as the  
hrase-is, pell-mell. I also was there, partly hurried on  
y the crowd, partly to prevail on our enraged soldiers  
o give quarter ; for it grieved my heart to see Christians  
nd Englishmen hashed down with swords and gunstocks,  
ike curs in the street, when there is an alarm of mad  
ogs. In this way, the soldiers fighting and slaughter-  
ng, and I calling to them to stay their hand, we gained  
he very roof of the building, which was in part leaded,  
nd to which, as a last tower of refuge, those of the  
avaliers, who yet escaped, had retired. I was myself,  
may say, forced up the narrow winding staircase by our  
oldiers, who rushed on like dogs of chase upon their  
ey ; and when extricated from the passage, I found  
yself in the midst of a horrid scene. The scattered  
cfenders were, some resisting with the fury of despair ;  
ome on their knees, imploring for compassion in words  
nd tones to break a man's heart when he thinks on them ;  
ome were calling on God for mercy ; and it was time,  
or man had none. They were stricken down, thrust  
rough, flung from the battlements into the lake ; and  
e wild cries of the victors, mingled with the groans  
icks, and clamours, of the vanquished, made a sou-



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so horrible, that only death can erase it from my memory. And the men who butchered their fellow-creatures thus, were neither pagans from distant savage lands, nor ruffians, the refuse and offscourings of our own people. They were in calm blood reasonable, nay, religious men, maintaining a fair repute both heavenward and earthward. Oh, Master Everard, your trade of war should be feared and avoided, since it converts such men into wolves towards their fellow-creatures ! ”

“ It is a stern necessity,” said Everard, looking down, “ and as such alone is justifiable. But proceed, reverend sir ; I see not how this storm, an incident but e’en too frequent on both sides during the late war, connects with the affair of last night.”

“ You shall hear anon,” said Mr. Holdenough ; then paused as one who makes an effort to compose himself before continuing a relation, the tenor of which agitated him with much violence.—“ In this infernal tumult,” he resumed,—“ for surely nothing on earth could so much resemble hell, as when men go thus loose in mortal malice on their fellow-creatures,—I saw the same priest whom I had distinguished on the causeway, with one or two other malignants, pressed into a corner by the assailants, and defending themselves to the last, as those who had no hope.—I saw him—I knew him—Oh, Colonel Everard ! ”

He grasped Everard's hand with his own left hand, and pressed the palm of his right to his face and forehead, sobbing aloud.

“ It was your college companion ? ” said Everard, anticipating the catastrophe.

“ Mine ancient—mine only friend—with whom I had spent the happy days of youth !—I rushed forward—I struggled—I entreated—But my eagerness left me neither voice nor language—all was drowned in the wretched cry which I had myself raised—Down with the priest of Bea

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—Slay Mattan—slay him were he between the altars!—Forced over the battlements, but struggling for life, I could see him cling to one of those projections which were formed to carry the water from the leads, but they hacked at his arms and hands. I heard the heavy fall into the bottomless abyss below. Excuse me—I cannot go on."

"He may have escaped."

"Oh! no, no, no—the tower was four storeys in height. Even those who threw themselves into the lake from the lower windows, to escape by swimming, had no safety; for mounted troopers on the shore caught the same bloodthirsty humour which had seized the storming party, galloped around the margin of the lake, and shot those who were struggling for life in the water, or cut them down as they strove to get to land. They were all cut off and destroyed.—Oh! may the blood shed on that day remain silent!—Oh! that the earth may receive it in her recesses!—Oh! that it may be mingled for ever with the dark waters of that lake, so that it may never cry for vengeance against those whose anger was fierce, and who slaughtered in their wrath!—And, oh! may the erring man be forgiven who came into their assembly, and lent his voice to encourage their cruelty!—Oh! Albany, my brother, my brother, I have lamented for thee even as David for Jonathan!"\*

The good man sobbed aloud, and so much did Colonel Everard sympathise with his emotions, that he forebore to press him upon the subject of his own curiosity until the full tide of remorseful passion had for the time abated. It was, however, fierce and agitating, the more so, perhaps, that indulgence in strong mental feeling of any kind was foreign to the severe and ascetic character of the man, and was therefore the more over-powering when it had at once surmounted all restraints. Large tears flowed down the trembling features of his thin, and

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usually stern, or at least austere countenance ; he eagerly returned the compression of Everard's hand, as if thankful for the sympathy which the caress implied.

Presently after, Master Holdenough wiped his eyes, withdrew his hand gently from that of Everard, shaking it kindly as they parted, and proceeded with more composure : " Forgive me this burst of passionate feeling, worthy Colonel. I am conscious it little becomes a man of my cloth, who should be the bearer of consolation to others, to give way in mine own person to an extremity of grief, weak at least, if indeed it is not sinful ; for what are we, that we should weep and murmur touching that which is permitted ? But Albany was to me as a brother. The happiest days of my life, ere my call to mingle myself in the strife of the land had awakened me to my duties, were spent in his company. I—but I will make the rest of my story short."—Here he drew his chair close to that of Everard, and spoke in a solemn and mysterious tone of voice, almost lowered to a whisper—" I saw him last night."

" Saw *him*—saw whom ?" said Everard. " Can you mean the person whom "—

" Whom I saw so ruthlessly slaughtered," said the clergyman—" My ancient college friend—Joseph Albany."

" Master Holdenough, your cloth and your character alike must prevent your jesting on such a subject as this."

" Jestings !" answered Holdenough ; " I would as soon jest on my deathbed—as soon jest upon the Bible."

" But you must have been deceived," answered Everard, *hastily* ; " this tragical story necessarily often returns to *your mind*, and in moments when the imagination overcomes the evidence of the outward senses, your fancy must have presented to you an unreal appearance. Nothing more likely, when the mind is on the stretch

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nothing supernatural, than that the imagination supply the place with a chimera, while the overfeelings render it difficult to dispel the delusion."

"Colonel Everard," replied Holdenough, with austerity, "in discharge of my duty I must not fear the face of man; and, therefore, I tell you plainly, as I have done before with more observance, that when you bring your natural learning and judgment, as it is but too much your nature to do, to investigate the hidden things of another world, you might as well measure with the palm of your hand the waters of the Isis. Indeed, good sir, you err in this, and give men too much pretence to confound your honourable name with witch-advocates, free-thinkers, and atheists, even with such as this man Bletson, who, if the discipline of the church had its hand strengthened, as it was in the beginning of the great conflict, would have been long ere now cast out of the pale, and delivered over to the punishment of the flesh, that his spirit might, if possible, be yet saved."

"You mistake, Master Holdenough," said Colonel Everard; "I do not deny the existence of such preternatural visitations, because I cannot, and dare not, raise the voice of my own opinion against the testimony of ages, supported by such learned men as yourself. Nevertheless, though I grant the possibility of such things, I have scarce yet heard of an instance in my days so well fortified by evidence, that I could at once and distinctly say, This must have happened by supernatural agency, and not otherwise."

"Hear, then, what I have to tell," said the divine, "on the faith of a man, a Christian, and, what is more, a servant of our Holy Church; and, therefore, though unworthy, an elder and a teacher among Christians. I had taken my post yester evening in the half-furnished apartment, wherein hangs a huge mirror, which might have served Goliath of Gath to have admired himself in."

### WOODSTOCK.

when clothed from head to foot in his brazen armour. I the rather chose this place, because they informed me it was the nearest habitable room to the gallery in which they say you had been yourself assailed that evening by the Evil One.—Was it so, I pray you?"

"By some one with no good intentions I was assailed in that apartment. So far," said Colonel Everard, "you were correctly informed."

"Well, I chose my post as well as I might, even as a resolved general approaches his camp, and casts up his mound as nearly as he can to the besieged city. And, of a truth, Colonel Everard, if I felt some sensation of bodily fear—for even Elias, and the prophets, who commanded the elements, had a portion in our frail nature, much more such a poor sinful being as myself—yet was my hope and my courage high; and I thought of the texts which I might use, not in the wicked sense of periapts, or spells, as the blinded papists employ them, together with the sign of the cross and other fruitless forms, but as nourishing and supporting that true trust and confidence in the blessed promises, being the true shield of faith wherewith the fiery darts of Satan may be withstood and quenched. And thus armed and prepared, I sat me down to read, at the same time to write, that I might compel my mind to attend to those subjects which became the situation in which I was placed, as preventing any unlicensed excursions of the fancy, and leaving no room for my imagination to brood over idle fears. So I methodised, and wrote down what I thought meet for the time, and peradventure some hungry souls may yet profit by the food which I then prepared."

"It was wisely and worthily done, good and reverend sir," replied Colonel Everard. "I pray you to proceed."

"While I was thus employed, sir, and had been upon the matter for about three hours, not yielding to weariness

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ge thrilling came over my senses, and the  
l-fashioned apartment seemed to wax larger,  
r, and more cavernous, while the air of the  
more cold and chill. I know not if it was  
began to decay, or whether there cometh  
things as were then about to happen, a  
tmosphere, as it were, of terror, as Job saith  
own passage, 'Fear came upon me, and  
hich made my bones to shake;' and there  
g noise in my ears, and a dizziness in my  
t I felt like those who call for aid when there  
r, and was even prompted to flee, when I  
to pursue. It was then that something  
pass behind me, casting a reflection on the  
before which I had placed my writing-table,  
saw by assistance of the large standing light  
en in front of the glass. And I looked up,  
the glass distinctly the appearance of a man  
these words issue from my mouth, it was no  
he same Joseph Albany—the companion of  
ie whom I had seen precipitated down the  
of Clidesthrough Castle into the deep lake

d you do?"

enly rushed on my mind," said the divine,  
oical philosopher Athenodorus had eluded  
of such a vision by patiently pursuing his  
it shot at the same time across my mind,  
Christian divine, and a Steward of the  
rad less reason to fear evil, and better  
which to employ my thoughts, than was  
y a Heathen, who was blinded even by his  
t. So, instead of betraying any alarm, or  
my head around, I pursued my writing  
ating heart, I admit, and with a throb

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"If you could write at all," said the Colonel, "with such an impression on your mind, you may take the head of the English army for dauntless resolution."

"Our courage is not our own, Colonel," said the divine, "and not as ours should it be vaunted of. And again, when you speak of this strange vision as an impression on my fancy, and not a reality obvious to my senses, let me tell you once more, your worldly wisdom is but foolishness touching the things that are not worldly."

"Did you not look again upon the mirror?" said the Colonel.

"I did, when I had copied out the comfortable text, 'Thou shalt tread down Satan under thy feet.'"

"And what did you then see?"

"The reflection of the same Joseph Albany," said Holdenough, "passing slowly as from behind my chair—the same in member and lineament that I had known him in his youth, excepting that his cheek had the marks of the more advanced age at which he died, and was very pale."

"What did you then?"

"I turned from the glass, and plainly saw the figure which had made the reflection in the mirror retreating towards the door, not fast, nor slow, but with a gliding steady pace. It turned again when near the door, and again showed me its pale, ghastly countenance, before it disappeared. But how it left the room, whether by the door, or otherwise, my spirits were too much hurried to remark exactly; nor have I been able, by any effort of recollection, distinctly to remember."

"This is a strange, and, as coming from you, a most excellently well-attested apparition," answered Everard.

"And yet, Master Holdenough, if the other world has been actually displayed, as you apprehend, and I will not dispute the possibility, assure yourself there are also

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wicked men concerned in these machinations. I myself have undergone some rencontres with visitants who possessed bodily strength, and wore, I am sure, earthly weapons."

"Oh! doubtless, doubtless," replied Master Hold-enough; "Beelzebub loves to charge with horse and foot mingled, as was the fashion of the old Scottish general, Davie Leslie. He has his devils in the body as well as his devils disembodied, and uses the one to support and back the other."

"It may be as you say, reverend sir," answered the Colonel.—"But what do you advise in this case?"

"For that I must consult with my brethren," said the divine; "and if there be but left in our borders five ministers of the true kirk, we will charge Satan in full body, and you shall see whether we have not power over him to resist till he shall flee from us. But failing that ghostly armament against these strange and un-earthly enemies, truly I would recommend, that as a house of witchcraft and abomination, this polluted den of ancient tyranny and prostitution should be totally consumed by fire, lest Satan, establishing his headquarters so much to his mind, should find a garrison and a fastness from which he might sally forth to infest the whole neighbourhood. Certain it is, that I would recommend to no Christian soul to inhabit the mansion; and, if deserted, it would become a place for wizards to play their pranks, and witches to establish their Sabbath, and those who, like Demas, go about after the wealth of this world, seeking for gold and silver, to practise spells and charms to the prejudice of the souls of the covetous. Trust me, therefore, it were better that it were spoiled and broken down, not leaving one stone upon another."

"I say nay to that, my good friend," said the Colonel; "for the Lord-General hath permitted, by his license,



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my mother's brother, Sir Henry Lee, and his family, to return into the house of his fathers, being indeed the only roof under which he hath any chance of obtaining shelter for his grey hairs."

"And was this done by your advice, Markham Everard?" said the divine, austerely.

"Certainly it was," returned the Colonel.—"And wherefore should I not exert mine influence to obtain a place of refuge for the brother of my mother?"

"Now, as sure as thy soul liveth," answered the presbyter, "I had believed this from no tongue but thine own. Tell me, was it not this very Sir Henry Lee, who, by the force of his buffcoats and his green-jerkins, enforced the papist Laud's order to remove the altar to the eastern end of the church at Woodstock?—and did not he swear by his beard, that he would hang in the very street of Woodstock whoever should deny to drink the King's health?—and is not his hand red with the blood of the saints?—and hath there been a ruffler in the field for prelacy and high prerogative more unmitigable or fiercer?"

"All this may have been as you say, good Master Holdenough," answered the Colonel; "but my uncle is now old and feeble, and hath scarce a single follower remaining, and his daughter is a being whom to look upon would make the sternest weep for pity; a being who"—

"Who is dearer to Everard," said Holdenough, "than his good name, his faith to his friends, his duty to his religion;—this is no time to speak with sugared lips. The paths in which you tread are dangerous. You are *striving to raise the papistical candlestick which Heaven in its justice removed out of its place—to bring back to this hall of sorceries those very sinners who are bewitched with them. I will not permit the land to be abused by air witchcrafts.*—They shall not come hither."

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He spoke this with vehemence, and striking his stick against the ground ; and the Colonel, very much dissatisfied, began to express himself haughtily in return.

‘You had better consider your power to accomplish your threats, Master Holdenough,’ he said, ‘before you urge them so peremptorily.’

‘And have I not the power to bind and to loose?’ said the clergyman.

‘It is a power little available, save over those of your own Church,’ said Everard, with a tone something contemptuous.

‘Take heed—take heed,’ said the divine, who, though an excellent, was, as we have elsewhere seen, an irritable man.—‘Do not insult me ; but think honourably of the messenger, for the sake of Him whose commission he carries.—Do not, I say, defy me—I am bound to discharge my duty, were it to the displeasing of my twin brother.’

‘I can see nought your office has to do in the matter,’ said Colonel Everard ; ‘and I, on my side, give you warning not to attempt to meddle beyond your commission.’

‘Right—you hold me already to be as submissive as one of your grenadiers,’ replied the clergyman, his acute features trembling with a sense of indignity, so as even to agitate his grey hair ; ‘but beware, sir, I am not so powerless as you suppose. I will invoke every true Christian in Woodstock to gird up his loins, and resist the restoration of prelacy, oppression, and malignancy within our borders. I will stir up the wrath of the righteous against the oppressor—the Ishmaelite—the Edomite—and against his race, and against those who support him and encourage him to rear up his horn. I will call aloud, and spare not, and arouse the many whose love hath waxed cold, and the multitude who care for none of these things. There shall be

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remnant to listen to me ; and I will take the stick of Joseph, which was in the hand of Ephraim, and go down to cleanse this place of witches and sorcerers, and of enchantments, and will cry and exhort, saying—Will you plead for Baal?—will you serve him? Nay, take the prophets of Baal—let not a man escape ! ”

“ Master Holdenough, Master Holdenough,” said Colonel Everard, with much impatience, “ by the tale yourself told me, you have exhorted upon that text once too often already.”

The old man struck his palm forcibly against his forehead, and fell back into a chair as these words were uttered, as suddenly, and as much without power of resistance, as if the Colonel had fired a pistol through his head. Instantly regretting the reproach which he had suffered to escape him in his impatience, Everard hastened to apologise, and to offer every conciliatory excuse, however inconsistent, which occurred to him on the moment. But the old man was too deeply affected—he rejected his hand, lent no ear to what he said, and finally started up, saying sternly, “ You have abused my confidence, sir—abused it vilely, to turn it into my own reproach ; had I been a man of the sword, you dared not—But enjoy your triumph, sir, over an old man, and your father’s friend—strike at the wound his imprudent confidence showed you.”

“ Nay, my worthy and excellent friend,” said the Colonel—

“ Friend ! ” answered the old man, starting up—“ We are foes, sir—foes now, and for ever ! ”

*So saying, and starting from the seat into which he had rather fallen than thrown himself, he ran out of the room with a precipitation of step which he was apt to use upon occasions of irritable feeling, and which was certainly more eager than dignified, especially as he*

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While he ran, and seemed as if he were keeping own passion, by recounting over and over the which he had received.

"Oh!" said Colonel Everard, "and there was not enough between mine uncle and the people of Woodstock already, but I must needs increase it, by adding this irritable and quick-tempered old man, eager as I knew him to be in his ideas of church-government, and stiff in his prejudices respecting all who dissent from him! The mob of Woodstock will rise; for though he would not get a score of them to stand by him in any honest or intelligible purpose, yet let him cry havoc and destruction, and I will warrant he has followers enow. And my uncle is equally wild and unpersuadable. For the value of all the estate he ever had, he would not allow a score of troopers to be quartered in the house for defence; and if he be alone, or has but Joceline to stand by him, he will be as sure to fire upon those who come to attack the Lodge, as if he had a hundred men in garrison; and then what can chance but danger and bloodshed?"

This progress of melancholy anticipation was interrupted by the return of Master Holdenough, who, hurrying into the room with the same precipitate pace at which he had left it, ran straight up to the Colonel, and said, "Take my hand, Markham—take my hand hastily; for the old Adam is whispering at my heart, that it is a disgrace to hold it extended so long."

"Most heartily do I receive your hand, my venerable friend," said Everard, "and I trust in sign of renewed amity."

"Surely, surely,"—said the divine, shaking his hand kindly; "thou hast, it is true, spoken bitterly, but thou hast spoken truth in good time; and I think—though your words were severe—with a good and kind purpose. Verily, and of a truth, it were sinful in

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again to be hasty in provoking violence, remembering that which you have upbraided me with "——

"Forgive me, good Master Holdenough," said Colonel Everard, "it was a hasty word ; I meant not in serious earnest to *upbraid*."

"Peace, I pray you, peace," said the divine ; "I say, the allusion to that which you have *most justly* upbraided me with—though the charge aroused the gall of the old man within me, the inward tempter being ever on the watch to bring us to his lure—ought, instead of being resented, to have been acknowledged by me as a favour, for so are the wounds of a friend termed faithful. And surely I, who have by one unhappy exhortation to battle and strife sent the living to the dead—and I fear brought back even the dead among the living—should now study peace and good-will, and reconciliation of difference, leaving punishment to the Great Being whose laws are broken, and vengeance to Him who hath said, I will repay it.

The old man's mortified features lighted up with a humble confidence as he made this acknowledgment ; and Colonel Everard, who knew the constitutional infirmities, and the early prejudices of professional consequence and exclusive party opinion, which he must have subdued ere arriving at such a tone of candour, hastened to express his admiration of his Christian charity, mingled with reproaches on himself for having so deeply injured his feelings.

"Think not of it—think not of it, excellent young man," said Holdenough ; "we have both erred—I in suffering my zeal to outrun my charity, you perhaps in pressing hard on an old and peevish man, who had so *lately poured out his sufferings* into your friendly bosom. *Be it all forgotten.* Let your friends, if they are not *deterred by what has happened* at this manor of Woodstock, resume their habitation as soon as they will. If

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protect themselves against the powers of the  
ave me, that if I can prevent it by aught in my  
they shall have no annoyance from earthly neigh-  
; and assure yourself, good sir, that my voice is  
worth something with the worthy Mayor and the  
Aldermen, and the better sort of housekeepers up  
der in the town, although the lower classes are blown  
out with every wind of doctrine. And yet farther, be  
ssured, Colonel, that should your mother's brother, or  
any of his family, learn that they have taken up a rash  
bargain in returning to this unhappy and unhallowed  
house, or should they find any qualms in their own  
hearts and consciences which require a ghostly comforter,  
Nehemiah Holdenough will be as much at their command  
by night or day, as if they had been bred up within the  
holy pale of the church in which he is an unworthy  
minister; and neither the awe of what is fearful to be  
seen within these walls, nor his knowledge of their blinded  
and carnal state, as bred up under a prelatic dispensation,  
shall prevent him doing what lies in his poor abilities for  
their protection and edification."

"I feel all the force of your kindness, reverend sir," said  
Colonel Everard, "but I do not think it likely that my  
uncle will give you trouble on either score. He is a man  
much accustomed to be his own protector in temporal  
anger, and in spiritual doubts to trust to his own prayers  
and those of his Church."

"I trust I have not been superfluous in offering mine  
assistance," said the old man, something jealous that his  
offered spiritual aid had been held rather intrusive.  
ask pardon if that is the case, I humbly ask pardon  
would not willingly be superfluous."

He Colonel hastened to appease this new alarm of the  
bful jealousy of his consequence, which, joined with  
atural heat of temper which he could not always  
were the good man's only faults.

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They had regained their former friendly footing, when Roger Wildrake returned from the hut of Joceline, and whispered his master that his embassy had been successful. The Colonel then addressed the divine, and informed him, that as the Commissioners had already given up Woodstock, and as his uncle, Sir Henry Lee, proposed to return to the Lodge about noon, he would, if his reverence pleased, attend him up to the borough.

"Will you not tarry," said the reverend man, with something like inquisitive apprehension in his voice, "to welcome your relatives upon their return to this their house?"

"No, my good friend," said Colonel Everard; "the part which I have taken in these unhappy broils, perhaps also the mode of worship in which I have been educated, have so prejudiced me in mine uncle's opinion, that I must be for some time a stranger to his house and family."

"Indeed! I rejoice to hear it with all my heart and soul," said the divine. "Excuse my frankness—I do indeed rejoice; I had thought—no matter what I had thought; I would not again give offence. But truly, though the maiden hath a pleasant feature, and he, as all men say, is in human things unexceptionable, yet,—but I give you pain—in sooth, I will say no more unless you ask my sincere and unprejudiced advice, which you shall command, but which I will not press on you superfluously. Wend we to the borough together—the pleasant solitude of the forest may dispose us to open our hearts to each other."

They did walk up to the little town in company, and somewhat to Master Holdenough's surprise, the Colonel, though they talked on various subjects, did not request of him any ghostly advice on the subject of his love to his fair cousin, while, greatly beyond the expecta-

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a soldier, the clergyman kept his word, and in phrase, was not so superfluous as to offer upon a point his unasked counsel.

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### CHAP. XVIII.

*Then are the harpies gone—Yet ere we perch  
Where such foul birds have roosted, let us cleanse  
The foul obscenity they've left behind them.*

AGAMEMNON.

**T**HE embassy of Wildrake had been successful, chiefly through the mediation of the Episcopal divine, whom we formerly found acting in the character of a chaplain to the family, and whose voice had great influence on many accounts with its master.

A little before high noon, Sir Henry Lee, with his small household, were again in unchallenged possession of their old apartments at the Lodge of Woodstock ; and the combined exertions of Joceline Joliffe, of Phoebe, and of old Joan, were employed in putting to rights what the late intruders had left in great disorder.

Sir Henry Lee had, like all persons of quality of that period, a love of order amounting to precision, and felt like a fine lady whose dress has been disordered in a crowd, insulted and humiliated by the rude confusion into which his household goods had been thrown, and impatient till his mansion was purified from all marks of intrusion. In his anger he uttered more orders than the limited number of his domestics were likely to find time or hands to execute. " The villains have left such sulphurous steams behind them, too," said the old knight, " as if old Davie Leslie and the whole Scottish army had quartered among them."

" It may be near as bad," said Joceline, " for men "



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for certain, it was the devil came down bodily among them, and made them troop off."

"Then," said the knight, "is the Prince of Darkness a gentleman, as old Will Shakspeare says. He never interferes with those of his coat, for the Lees have been here, father and son, these five hundred years, without disquiet; and no sooner came these misbegotten churls, than he plays his own part among them."

"Well, one thing he and they have left us," said Joliffe, "which we may thank them for; and that is, such a well-filled larder and buttery as has been seldom seen in Woodstock Lodge this many a day; carcasses of mutton, large rounds of beef; barrels of confectioners' ware, pipes and runlets of sack, muscadine, ale, and what not. We shall have a royal time on't through half the winter; and Joan must get to salting and pickling presently."

"Out, villain!" said the knight; "are we to feed on the fragments of such scum of the earth as these? Cast them forth instantly! Nay," checking himself, "that were a sin; but give them to the poor, or see them sent to the owners. And hark ye, I will none of their strong liquors. I would rather drink like a hermit all my life, than seem to pledge such scoundrels as these in their leavings, like a miserable drawer; who drains off the ends of the bottles after the guests have paid their reckoning, and gone off. And, hark ye, I will taste no water from the cistern out of which these slaves have been serving themselves—fetch me down a pitcher from Rosamond's spring."

Alice heard this injunction, and well guessing there was enough for the other members of the family to do, she quietly took a small pitcher, and flinging a cloak around her, walked out in person to procure Sir Henry the water which he desired. Meantime, Joceline said, with some hesitation, "that a man still remained, belonging to the party of these strangers, who was directing

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the removal of some trunks and mails which belonged to the Commissioners, and who could receive his own's commands about the provisions."

"Let him come hither." (The dialogue was held in the hall.) "Why do you hesitate and drumble in that manner?"

"Only, sir," said Joceline, "only perhaps your honour might not wish to see him, being the same who, not long since" —

He paused.

"Sent my rapier a-hawking through the firmament, thou wouldst say? Why, when did I take spleen at a man for standing his ground against me? Roundhead as he is, man, I like him the better of that, not the worse. I hunger and thirst to have another turn with him. I have thought on his passado ever since, and I believe, were it to try again, I know a feat would control it. Fetch him directly."

Trusty Tomkins was presently ushered in, bearing himself with an iron gravity, which neither the terrors of the preceding night, nor the dignified demeanour of the high-born personage before whom he stood, were able for an instant to overcome.

"How now, good fellow?" said Sir Henry; "I would fain see something more of thy fence, which baffled me the other evening; but truly, I think the light was somewhat too faint for my old eyes. Take a foil, man—I walk here in the hall, as Hamlet says; and 'tis the breathing-time of day with me. Take a foil, then, in thy hand."

"Since it is your worship's desire," said the steward, letting fall his long cloak, and taking the foil in his hand.

"Now," said the knight, "if your fitness speaks, mine is ready. Methinks the very stepping on this same old pavement hath charmed away the gout which threatened me. Sa—sa—I tread as firm as a game-cock."

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They began the play with great spirit; and whether the old knight really fought more coolly with the blunt than with the sharp weapon, or whether the steward gave him some grains of advantage in this merely sportive encounter, it is certain Sir Henry had the better in the assault. His success put him into excellent humour.

"There," said he, "I found your trick—nay, you cheat me not twice the same way. There was a very palpable hit. Why, had I had but light enough the other night—But it skills not speaking of it—Here we leave off. I must not fight, as we unwise cavaliers did with you roundhead rascals, beating you so often that we taught you to beat us at last. And good now, tell me why you are leaving your larder so full here? Do you think I or my family can use broken victuals? What, have you no better employment for your rounds of sequestered beef than to leave them behind you when you shift your quarters?"

"So please your honour," said Tomkins, "it may be that you desire not the flesh of beeves, of rams, or of goats. Nevertheless, when you know that the provisions were provided and paid for out of your own rents and stock at Ditchley, sequestered to the use of the state more than a year since, it may be you will have less scruple to use them for your own behoof."

"Rest assured that I shall," said Sir Henry; "and glad you have helped me to a share of mine own. Certainly I was an ass to suspect your masters of subsisting save at honest men's expense."

"And as for the rumps of beeves," continued Tomkins, with the same solemnity, "there is a rump at *Westminster*, which will stand us of the army much *hacking and hewing* yet, ere it is discussed to our mind."

*Sir Henry* paused, as if to consider what was the

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of this innuendo; for he was not a person of quick apprehension. But having at length caught the meaning of it, he burst into an explosion of louder laughter than Joceline had seen him indulge in for a while.

Right, knave," he said, "I taste thy jest—It is the very moral of the puppet-show. Faustus raised the devil, as the Parliament raised the army, and then, as the devil flies away with Faustus, so will the army fly away with the Parliament, or the rump, as thou call'st it, or sitting part of the so-called Parliament. And then, look you, friend, the very devil of all hath my willing consent to fly away with the army in its turn, from the highest general down to the lowest drum-boy. Nay, never look fierce for the matter; remember there is daylight enough now for a game at sharps."

Trusty Tomkins appeared to think it best to suppress his displeasure; and observing that the wains were ready to transport the Commissioners' property to the borough, took a grave leave of Sir Henry Lee.

Meantime the old man continued to pace his recovered hall, rubbing his hands, and evincing greater signs of glee than he had shown since the fatal 30th of January.

"Here we are again in the old frank, Joliffe; well victualled too. How the knave solved my point of conscience!—the dullest of them is a special casuist where the question concerns profit. Look out if there are not some of our own ragged regiment lurking about, to whom a bellyful would be a God-send, Joceline. Then his fence, Joceline, though the fellow foins well, very sufficient well. But thou saw'st how I dealt with him when I had fitting light, Joceline."

"Ay, and so your honour did," said Joceline. "You taught him to know the Duke of Norfolk from Saunders Gardner. I'll warrant him he will not wish to come under your honour's thumb again."

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"Why, I am waxing old," said Sir Henry; "but skill will not rust through age, though sinews must stiffen. But my age is like a lusty winter, as old Will says, frosty but kindly; and what if, old as we are, we live to see better days yet! I promise thee, Joceline, I love this jarring betwixt the rogues of the board and the rogues of the sword. When thieves quarrel, true men have a chance of coming by their own."

Thus triumphed the old cavalier, in the treble glory of having recovered his dwelling,—regained, as he thought, his character as a man of fence, and finally, discovered some prospect of a change of times, in which he was not without hopes that something might turn up for the royal interest.

Meanwhile, Alice, with a prouder and lighter heart than had danced in her bosom for several days, went forth with a gaiety to which she of late had been a stranger, to contribute her assistance to the regulation and supply of the household, by bringing the fresh water wanted from Fair Rosamond's well.

Perhaps she remembered, that when she was but a girl, her cousin Markham used, among others, to make her perform that duty, as presenting the character of some captive Trojan princess, condemned by her situation to draw the waters from some Grecian spring, for the use of the proud victor. At any rate, she certainly joyed to see her father reinstated in his ancient habitation; and the joy was not the less sincere, that she knew their return to Woodstock had been procured by means of her cousin, and that, even in her father's prejudiced eyes, Everard had been in some degree exculpated of the accusations the old knight had brought against him, and that, if a reconciliation had not yet taken place, the preliminaries had been established on which such a desirable conclusion might easily be founded. It was the commencement of a bridge; when the founda-

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securely laid, and the piers raised above the  
of the torrent, the throwing of the arches may  
omplished in a subsequent season.

doubtful fate of her only brother might have  
ed even this momentary gleam of sunshine; but  
e had been bred up during the close and frequent  
test of civil war, and had acquired the habit of hoping  
behalf of those dear to her, until hope was lost. In  
ne present case, all reports seemed to assure her of her  
brother's safety.

Besides these causes for gaiety, Alice Lee had the  
pleasing feeling that she was restored to the habitation  
and the haunts of her childhood, from which she had  
not departed without much pain, the more felt, perhaps,  
because suppressed, in order to avoid irritating her  
father's sense of his misfortune. Finally, she enjoyed  
for the instant the gleam of self-satisfaction by which we  
see the young and well-disposed so often animated,  
when they can be, in common phrase, helpful to those  
whom they love, and perform at the moment of need  
some of those little domestic tasks, which age receives  
with so much pleasure from the dutiful hands of youth.  
So that, altogether, as she hasted through the remains  
and vestiges of a wilderness already mentioned, and from  
thence about a bow-shot into the Park, to bring a pitcher  
of water from Rosamond's spring, Alice Lee, her features  
enlivened and her complexion a little raised by the exer-  
cise, had, for the moment, regained the gay and brilliant  
vivacity of expression which had been the characteristic  
of her beauty in her earlier and happier days.

This fountain of old memory had been once adorned  
with architectural ornaments in the style of the sixteenth  
century, chiefly relating to ancient mythology. All these  
*were now* wasted and overthrown, and existed only as  
*moss-covered* ruins, while the living spring continued to  
*furnish its daily treasures, unrivalled in purity, though*

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quantity was small, gushing out amid disjointed stones, and bubbling through fragments of ancient sculpture.

With a light step and laughing brow the young Lady of Lee was approaching the fountain usually so solitary, when she paused on beholding some one seated beside it. She proceeded, however, with confidence, though with a step something less gay, when she observed that the person was a female ; some menial, perhaps from the town, whom a fanciful mistress occasionally despatched for the water of a spring, supposed to be peculiarly pure, or some aged woman, who made a little trade by carrying it to the better sort of families, and selling it for a trifle. There was no cause, therefore, for apprehension.

Yet the terrors of the times were so great, that Alice did not see a stranger even of her own sex without some apprehension. Denaturalised women had as usual followed the camps of both armies during the Civil War ; who, on the one side with open profligacy and profanity, on the other with the fraudulent tone of fanaticism or hypocrisy, exercised nearly in like degree their talents for murder or plunder. But it was broad daylight, the distance from the Lodge was but trifling, and though a little alarmed at seeing a stranger where she expected deep solitude, the daughter of the haughty old Knight had too much of the lion about her, to fear without some determined and decided cause.

Alice walked, therefore, gravely on towards the fount, and composed her looks as she took a hasty glance of the female who was seated there, and addressed herself to her task of filling her pitcher.

*The woman, whose presence had surprised and somewhat startled Alice Lee, was a person of the lower rank, whose red cloak, russet kirtle, handkerchief trimmed with Coventry blue, and a coarse steeple hat, could not indicate at best anything higher than the wife of a small*

not on. This round ..

men by whom they were worn, but were  
in she had become the mistress by some  
by some successful robbery. Her size, too,  
like Alice, even in the short perusal she  
finger, was unusual ; her features swarthy  
harsh, and her manner altogether unpro-  
young lady almost wished, as she stooped  
her, that she had rather turned back, and  
on the errand ; but repentance was too  
l she had only to disguise as well as she  
pleasant feelings.

ssings of this bright day to one as bright as  
he stranger, with no unfriendly, though a

you," said Alice in reply ; and continued to  
her busily, by assistance of an iron bow  
ied still chained to one of the stones beside

old accent or



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"Are you offended, my pretty mistress?" said the stranger; "that was far from my purpose.—I will put my question otherwise.—Are the good dames of Woodstock so careless of their pretty daughters as to let the flower of them all wander about the wild chase without a mother, or a somebody to prevent the fox from running away with the lamb?—that carelessness, methinks, shows small kindness."

"Content yourself, good woman, I am not far from protection and assistance," said Alice, who liked less and less the effrontry of her new acquaintance.

"Alas! my pretty maiden," said the stranger, patting with the large and hard hand the head which Alice had kept bended down towards the water which she was laving, "it would be difficult to hear such a pipe as yours at the town of Woodstock, scream as loud as you would."

Alice shook the woman's hand angrily off, took up her pitcher, though not above half full, and as she saw the stranger rise at the same time, said, not without fear, doubtless, but with a natural feeling of resentment and dignity, "I have no reason to make my cries heard as far as Woodstock; were there occasion for my crying for help at all, it is nearer at hand."

She spoke not without a warrant; for, at the moment, broke through the bushes, and stood by her side, the noble hound Bevis; fixing on the stranger his eyes that glanced fire, raising every hair on his gallant mane as upright as the bristles as a wild boar when hard pressed, grinning till a case of teeth, which would have matched those of any wolf in Russia, were displayed in full array, *and, without either barking or springing, seeming, by his low determined growl, to await but the signal for dashing at the female, whom he plainly considered as a suspicious person.*

*But the stranger was undaunted. "My pretty maiden,"*

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"you have indeed a formidable guardian there, cockneys or bumpkins are concerned ; but we have been at the wars know spells for taming such as dragons ; and therefore let not your four-footed actor go loose on me, for he is a noble animal, and nothing but self-defence would induce me to do him injury." So saying, she drew a pistol from her bosom, and cocked it—pointing it towards the dog, as if apprehensive that he would spring upon her.

"Hold, woman, hold !" said Alice Lee ; "the dog will not do you harm.—Down, Bevis, couch down.—And ere you attempt to hurt him, know he is the favoured hound of Sir Henry Lee of Ditchley, the keeper of Woodstock Park, who would severely revenge any injury offered to him,"

"And you, pretty one, are the old knight's house-keeper, doubtless ? I have often heard the Lees have good taste."

"I am his daughter, good woman."

"His daughter !—I was blind—but yet it is true, nothing less perfect could answer the description which all the world has given of Mistress Alice Lee. I trust that my folly has given my young mistress no offence, and that she will allow me, in token of reconciliation, to fill her pitcher, and carry it as far as she will permit."

"As you will, good mother ; but I am about to return instantly to the Lodge, to which, in these times, I cannot admit strangers. You can follow me no farther than the verge of the wilderness, and I am already too long from home : I will send some one to meet and relieve you of the pitcher." So saying, she turned her back, with a feeling of terror which she could hardly account for, and began to walk quickly towards the Lodge, thinking thus to get rid of her troublesome acquaintance.

But she reckoned without her host ; for in a moment.

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by her side, not running, indeed, dignified long unwomanly strides, far up with the hurried and timid maiden. But her manner was formerly, though her voice sounded disagreeable, and her whole appearance undefined, yet irresistible feeling

ger, lovely Mistress Alice," said her father, "as not capable of distinguishing between high quality and a peasant wench, you with a degree of freedom, ill becoming, certainly, and condition, and which, I am sure, will do you no offence."

"Whatever," replied Alice; "but, good father, I am not at home, and can excuse your farther coming, as your business is unknown to me."

"I am not," said the stranger, "that your father is not known to me, fair Mistress Alice. I have a warthy brow—England breeds none such as I—complexion, from which I come, the sun which has darkened our brains, pours, to make amends, rays of warmth into our climate. Let me look upon your prettiness, and I shall be content to possess myself of it,—and I permit you to hear what will please you."

"What does *not* please me," said Alice, "you must carry your tricks of fortune-telling to the women of the village—We of this village told them to be either imposture or unbelief."

"You would fain hear of a certain Colonel, I think, whom certain unhappy circumstances have separated from his family; you would give better assurance you that you would see him in a moment, perhaps sooner."

y  
i

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nothing of what you speak, good woman ; if  
ms, there is a piece of silver—it is all I have.  
"

pity that I should take it," said the female ;  
give it me—for the princess in the fairy tale  
deserve, by her generosity, the bounty of  
ent fairy, before she is rewarded by her pro-

—take it—give me my pitcher," said Alice,  
ie,—yonder comes one of my father's servants.  
—Joceline—Joceline ! "

fortune-teller hastily dropped something into  
as she restored it to Alice Lee, and, plying her  
disappeared speedily under cover of the

ned, and backed, and showed some inclina-  
ss the retreat of this suspicious person, yet,  
uin, ran towards Joliffe, and fawned on him,  
nd his advice and encouragement. Joceline  
: animal, and, coming up to his young lady,  
ith surprise what was the matter, and whether  
n frightened ? Alice made light of her alarm,  
ndeed, she could not have assigned any very  
eason, for the manners of the woman, though  
intrusive, were not menacing. She only said  
et a fortune-teller by Rosamond's Well, and  
ne difficulty in shaking her off.

: gipsy thief," said Joceline, " how well she  
re was food in the pantry !—they have noses  
these strollers. Look you, Mistress Alice,  
ot see a raven, or a carrion-crow, in all the  
r a mile round you ; but let a sheep drop  
own on the greensward, and before the poor  
ead you shall see a dozen of such guests  
if inviting each other to the banquet.—Just  
these sturdy beggars. You will see few

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enough of them when there's nothing to give, but when hough's in the pot, they will have share on't."

"You are so proud of your fresh supply of provender," said Alice, "that you suspect all of a design on't. I do not think this woman will venture near your kitchen, Joceline."

"It will be best for her health," said Joceline, "lest I give her a ducking for digestion.—But give me the pitcher, Mistress Alice—meeter I bear it than you.—How now? what jingles at the bottom? have you lifted the pebbles as well as the water?"

"I think the woman dropped something into the pitcher," said Alice.

"Nay, we must look to that, for it is like to be a charm, and we have enough of the devil's ware about Woodstock already—we will not spare for the water—I can run back and fill the pitcher." He poured out the water upon the grass, and at the bottom of the pitcher was found a gold ring, in which was set a ruby, apparently of some value.

"Nay, if this be not enchantment, I know not what is," said Joceline. "Truly, Mistress Alice, I think you had better throw away this grimcrack. Such gifts from such hands are a kind of press-money which the devil uses for enlisting his regiment of witches; and if they take but so much as a bean from him, they become his bond slaves for life—Ay, you look at the gewgaw, but to-morrow you will find a lead ring, and a common pebble in its stead."

"Nay, Joceline, I think it will be better to find out that dark-complexioned woman, and return to her what *seems of some value*. So, cause inquiry to be made, *and be sure you return her ring*. It seems too valuable *to be destroyed*."

"Umph! that is always the way with women," murmured Joceline. "You will never get the best of them."

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is willing to save a bit of finery.—Well, Mistress

I trust that you are too young and too pretty to be enlisted in a regiment of witches."

"I shall not be afraid of it till you turn conjuror," said he; "so hasten to the well, where you are like still to find the woman, and let her know that Alice Lee values none of her gifts, any more than she did of her vanity."

So saying, the young lady pursued her way to the lodge, while Joceline went down to Rosamond's Well to execute her commission. But the fortune-teller, or whoever she might be, was nowhere to be found; neither, finding that to be the case, did Joceline give himself much trouble in tracking her farther.

"If this ring, which I dare say the jade stole somewhere," said the under-keeper to himself, "be worth a few nobles, it is better in honest hands than in those of vagabonds. My master has a right to all waifs and strays, and certainly such a ring, in possession of a gipsy, must be a waif. So I shall confiscate it without scruple, and apply the produce to the support of Sir Henry's household, which is like to be poor enough. Thank Heaven, my military experience has taught me how to carry hooks at my finger-ends—that is trooper's law. Yet, hang it, after all, I had best take it to Mark Everard, and ask his advice—I hold him now to be your learned counsellor in law where Mistress Alice's affairs are concerned, and my learned Doctor, who shall be nameless, for such as concern Church and State and Sir Henry Lee—And I'll give them leave to give mine umbles to the kites and ravens if they find me conferring my confidence where it is not safe."

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### CHAP. XIX.

*Being skillless in these parts, which, to a stranger,  
Unguided and unfriended, often prove  
Rough and inhospitable.*—TWELFTH NIGHT.

**T**HERE was a little attempt at preparation; now that the dinner hour was arrived, which showed that, in the opinion of his few but faithful domestics, the good knight had returned in triumph to his home.

The great tankard, exhibiting in bas-relief the figure of Michael subduing the Arch-enemy, was placed on the table, and Joceline and Phoebe dutifully attended; the one behind the chair of Sir Henry, the other to wait upon her young mistress, and both to make out, by formal and regular observance, the want of a more numerous train.

"A health to King Charles!" said the old knight, handing the massive tankard to his daughter; "drink it, my love, though it be rebel ale which they left us. I will pledge thee; for the toast will excuse the liquor, had Noll himself brewed it."

The young lady touched the goblet with her lip, and returned it to her father, who took a copious draught.

"I will not say blessing on their hearts," said he; "though I must own they drank good ale."

"No wonder, sir; they come lightly by the malt, and need not spare it," said Joceline.

"Say'st thou?" said the knight; "thou shalt finish the tankard thyself for that very jest's sake."

*Nor was his follower slow in doing reason to the royal pledge. He bowed, and replaced the tankard, saying, after a triumphant glance at the sculpture, "I had a be with that same red-coat about the Saint Michael now."*

## WOODS

out—ha! what rec  
Do any of these kn  
Quoit him down :  
We not Galloway nags  
please you, he is in  
ily be gone.—It is he  
your honour in the woo  
Ay, but I paid him of  
urself saw.—I was never  
oceline. That same stewa  
black-hearted a rogue as tl  
He fences well—excellent w  
bout in the hall with him to  
will be too hard for thee.  
inch."

He might say this with sc



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"Joceline," said Alice, interrupting him, "wert thou mad? You know at what risk to ourselves and the good doctor the performance of that duty takes place."

"Oh, mistress Alice," said Joceline, a little abashed, "you may be sure I spoke not a word of the doctor—No, no—I did not let him into the secret that we had such a reverend chaplain.—I think I know the length of this man's foot. We have had a jollification or so together. He is hand and glove with me, for as great a fanatic as he is."

"Trust him not too far," said the knight. "Nay, I fear thou hast been imprudent already, and that it will be unsafe for the good man to come here after nightfall, as is proposed. These Independents have noses like bloodhounds, and can smell out a loyalist under any disguise."

"If your honour thinks so," said Joceline, "I'll watch for the doctor with good will, and bring him into the Lodge by the old condemned postern, and so up to this apartment; and sure this man Tomkins would never presume to come hither; and the doctor may have a bed in Woodstock Lodge, and he never the wiser; or, if your honour does not think that safe, I can cut his throat for you, and I would not mind it a pin."

"God forbid!" said the knight. "He is under our roof, and a guest, though not an invited one.—Go, Joceline; it shall be thy penance, for having given thy tongue too much license, to watch for the good doctor, and to take care of his safety while he continues with us. An October night or two in the forest would finish the good man."

"*He's more like to finish our October than our October is to finish him,*" said the keeper, and withdrew under the encouraging smile of his patron.

*He whistled Bevis along with him to share in his watch; and having received exact information where the clergy-*

## WOODSTOCK.

is most likely to be found; assured his master that he would give the most pointed attention to his safety. When the attendants had withdrawn, having previously cleared the remains of the meal, the old knight, leaning in his chair, encouraged pleasanter visions than had before passed through his imagination, until by degrees he was surprised by actual slumber; while his daughter, venturing to move but on tiptoe, took some needle-work, and bringing it close by the old man's side, employed her fingers on this task, bending her eyes from time to time on her parent, with the affectionate zeal, if not the effective power, of a guardian angel. At length, as the light faded away, and night came on, she was about to order candles to be brought. But, remembering how indifferent a couch Joceline's cottage had afforded, she could not think of interrupting the first sound and refreshing sleep which her father had enjoyed, in all probability, for the last two nights and days.

She herself had no other amusement, as she sat facing one of the great oriel windows, the same by which Wildrake had on a former occasion looked in upon Tomkins and Joceline while at their computations, than watching the clouds, which a lazy wind sometimes chased from the broad disk of the harvest-moon, sometimes permitted to accumulate, and exclude her brightness. There is, I know not why, something peculiarly pleasing to the imagination in contemplating the Queen of Night, when she is *wading*, as the expression is, among the vapours, which she has not power to dispel, and which on their side are unable entirely to quench her lustre. It is the striking image of patient virtue, calmly pursuing her path through good report and bad report, having that excellence in herself which ought to command all admiration, *but bedimmed in the eyes of the world, by suffering, by misfortune, by calumny.*

*As some such reflections, perhaps, were passing through*

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Alice's imagination, she became sensible, to her surprise and alarm, that some one had clambered up upon the window, and was looking into the room. The idea of supernatural fear did not in the slightest degree agitate Alice. She was too much accustomed to the place and situation ; for folk do not see spectres in the scenes with which they have been familiar from infancy. But danger from marauders in a disturbed country was a more formidable subject of apprehension, and the thought armed Alice, who was naturally high-spirited, with such desperate courage, that she snatched a pistol from the wall, on which some firearms hung, and while she screamed to her father to awake, had the presence of mind to present it at the intruder. She did so the more readily, because she imagined she recognised in the visage, which she partially saw, the features of the woman whom she had met with at Rosamond's Well, and which had appeared to her peculiarly harsh and suspicious. Her father at the same time seized his sword and came forward, while the person at the window, alarmed at these demonstrations, and endeavouring to descend, missed footing, as had Cavaliero Wildrake before, and went down to the earth with no small noise. Nor was the reception on the bosom of our common mother either soft or safe ; for, by a most terrific bark and growl, they heard that Bevis had come up, and seized on the party, ere he or she could gain their feet.

"Hold fast, but worry not," said the old knight.—

"Alice, thou art the queen of wenches ! Stand fast here till I run down and secure the rascal."

"For God's sake, no, my dearest father !" Alice exclaimed ; "Joceline will be up immediately—Hark !—I hear him."

*There was indeed a bustle below, and more than one light danced to and fro in confusion, while those who bore them called to each other, yet suppressing the*

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ry spoke, as men who would only be heard  
ry addressed. The individual who had fallen  
power of Bevis was most impatient in his  
and called with least precaution—"Here, Lee,  
er—take the dog off, else I must shoot him."

hou dost," said Sir Henry, from the window, "I  
hy brains out on the spot. Thieves, Joceline,  
s! come up and secure this ruffian.—Bevis, hold on!"

Back Bevis; down, sir," cried Joceline. "I am  
ing, I am coming, Sir Henry—Saint Michael, I  
all go distracted!"

A terrible thought suddenly occurred to Alice; could  
Joceline have become unfaithful, that he was calling  
Bevis off the villain, instead of encouraging the trusty  
dog to secure him? Her father, meantime, moved per-  
haps by some suspicion of the same kind, hastily stepped  
aside out of the moonlight, and pulled Alice close to  
him, so as to be invisible from without, yet so placed as  
to hear what should pass. The scuffle between Bevis  
and his prisoner seemed to be ended by Joceline's inter-  
ference, and there was close whispering for an instant,  
as of people in consultation.

"All is quiet now," said one voice; "I will up and  
prepare the way for you." And immediately a form  
presented itself on the outside of the window, pushed  
open the lattice, and sprung into the parlour. But  
almost ere his step was upon the floor, certainly before  
he had obtained any secure footing, the old knight, who  
stood ready with his rapier drawn, made a desperate  
pass, which bore the intruder to the ground. Joceline,  
who clambered up next, with a dark lantern in his hand,  
uttered a dreadful exclamation, when he saw what had  
happened, crying out, "Lord in heaven, he has slain his  
own son!"

"No, no—I tell you no," said the fallen young man,  
who was indeed young Albert Lee, the only son of the  
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coming against his side with the whole force of the  
ouge, had borne him to the ground.

Joceline all the while enjoined silence to every one,  
under the strictest conjurations. "Silence, as you would  
ong live on earth—silence, as ye would have a place in  
eaven; be but silent for a few minutes—all our lives  
epend on it."

Meantime he procured lights with inexpressible de-  
patch, and they then beheld that Sir Henry, on hearing  
he fatal words, had sunk back on one of the large  
hairs, without either motion, colour, or sign of life.

"O brother, how could you come in this manner?"  
aid Alice.

"Ask no questions—Good God! for what am I re-  
erved!" He gazed on his father as he spoke, who,  
with clay-cold features rigidly fixed, and his arms em-  
ended in the most absolute helplessness, looked rather  
he image of death upon a monument, than a being in

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or hope, provided with incredible celerity all  
clergyman called for.

But a swoon," he said, on feeling Sir Henry's  
a swoon produced from the instant and un-  
shock. Rouse thee up, Albert; I promise thee  
on nothing save a syncope—A cup, my dearest  
and a riband or a bandage. I must take some  
—some aromatics, too, if they can be had, my  
Alice."

But while Alice procured the cup and bandage,  
clipped her father's sleeve, and seemed by intuition  
even to anticipate every direction of the reverend doctor,  
her brother, hearing no word, and seeing no sign of  
comfort, stood with both hands clasped and elevated  
into the air, a monument of speechless despair. Every  
feature in his face seemed to express the thought, "Here  
lies my father's corpse, and it is I whose rashness has  
slain him!"

But when a few drops of blood began to follow the  
lancet—at first falling singly, and then trickling in a  
freer stream—when, in consequence of the application  
of cold water to the temples, and aromatics to the  
nostrils, the old man sighed feebly, and made an effort  
to move his limbs, Albert Lee changed his posture, at  
once to throw himself at the feet of the clergyman, and  
kiss, if he would have permitted him, his shoes, and the  
hem of his raiment.

"Rise, foolish youth," said the good man, with a  
reproving tone; "must it be always thus with you?  
Kneel to Heaven, not to the feeblest of its agents. You  
have been saved once again from great danger; would  
you deserve Heaven's bounty, remember you have been  
preserved for other purposes than you now think on.  
*Begone, you and Joceline—you have a duty to dis-  
charge; and be assured it will go better with your  
father's recovery that he see you not for a few minutes.*

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wilderness, and bring in your

a thousand thanks," answered  
ging through the lattice, he dis-  
dly as he had entered. At the  
wed him, and by the same road.

her father were now something  
movement among the persons of  
sist appealing to her venerable  
or, answer me but one question.

here just now, or have I dreamed  
or these ten minutes past? Me-  
sence, I could suppose the whole  
ep; that horrible thrust—that  
old man—that soldier in mute  
have dreamed."

ned, my sweet Alice," said the  
sick-nurse had your property,  
attending to our patient better  
most of these old dormice can do  
awake. But your dream came  
n, my pretty darling, which you  
plain to you at leisure. Albert  
d will be here again."

Sir Henry; "who names my son?"  
atron," said the doctor; "permit  
l."

all my heart, doctor," said Sir  
and gathering his recollection by  
old thou wert body-curer as well  
ed my regiment for surgeon as  
where is the rascal I killed?—I  
*amazon* in my life. The shell of  
his ribs. So, dead he must be,  
got its cunning."

' said the doctor; "we must

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For that, since there were none but friends to  
e is a good cloak and doublet though,  
in a fashion which will require some skill in  
ft to cure. But I was your last antagonist, and  
ttle blood from you, merely to prepare you for  
asure and surprise of seeing your son, who, though  
d pretty close, as you may believe, hath made his  
from Worcester hither, where, with Joceline's as-  
ance, we will care well enough for his safety. It was  
n for this reason that I pressed you to accept of your  
ephew's proposal to return to the old Lodge, where a  
undred men might be concealed, though a thousand  
were making search to discover them. Never such a  
place for hide-and-seek, as I shall make good when I  
can find means to publish my Wonders of Wood-  
stock."

"But, my son, my dear son," said the knight; "shall I not then instantly see him? and wherefore did you not forewarn me of this joyful event?"

"Because I was uncertain of his motions," said the doctor, "and rather thought he was bound for the sea-side, and that it would be best to tell you of his fate when he was safe on board, and in full sail for France. We had appointed to let you know all when I came hither to-night to join you. But there is a red-coat in the house whom we care not to trust farther than we could not help. We dared not, therefore, venture in by the hall; and so, prowling round the building, Albert informed us, that an old prank of his when a boy consisted of entering by this window. A lad who was with us would needs make the experiment, as there seemed to be no light in the chamber, and the moonlight without made us liable to be detected. His foot slipped, and our friend Bevis came upon us."

"In good truth, you acted simply," said Sir Henry. "to attack a garrison without a summons. But all this



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is nothing to my son,—Albert—where is he?—Let me see him."

"But, Sir Henry, wait," said the doctor, "till your restored strength"—

"A plague of my restored strength, man!" answered the knight, as his old spirit began to awaken within him.—"Dost not remember that I lay on Edgehill-field all night bleeding like a bullock from five several wounds, and wore my armour within six weeks? and you talk to me of the few drops of blood that follow such a scratch as a cat's claw might have made!"

"Nay, if you feel so courageous," said the doctor, "I will fetch your son—he is not far distant."

So saying, he left the apartment, making a sign to Alice to remain, in case any symptoms of her father's weakness should return.

It was fortunate, perhaps, that Sir Henry never seemed to recollect the precise nature of the alarm, which had at once, and effectually as the shock of the thunderbolt, for the moment suspended his faculties. Something he said more than once of being certain he had done mischief with that *stramaçon*, as he called it; but his mind did not recur to that danger as having been incurred by his son. Alice, glad to see that her father appeared to have forgotten a circumstance so fearful (as men often forget the blow, or other sudden cause, which has thrown them into a swoon), readily excused herself from throwing much light on the matter, by pleading the general confusion. And in a few minutes, Albert cut off all farther inquiry, by entering the room, followed by the doctor, and throwing himself alternately into the arms of his father and of his sister.

## WOODSTOCK.

### CHAP. XX.

*The boy is—hark ye, sirrah—what's your name?—  
Oh, Jacob—ay, I recollect—the same.—CRABBE.*

**A** HE affectionate relatives were united as those who, meeting under great adversity, feel still the happiness of sharing it in common. They embraced again and again, and gave way to those expansions of the heart, which at once express and relieve the pressure of mental agitation. At length the tide of emotion began to subside ; and Sir Henry, still holding his recovered son by the hand, resumed the command of his feelings which he usually practised.

“So you have seen the last of our battles, Albert,” he said, “and the King's colours have fallen for ever before the rebels.”

“It is but even so,” said the young man—“the last cast of the die was thrown, and, alas ! lost at Worcester ; and Cromwell's fortune carried it there, as it has wherever he has shown himself.”

“Well—it can but be for a time—it can but be for a time,” answered his father ; “the devil is potent, they say, in raising and gratifying favourites, but he can grant but short leases.—And the King—the King, Albert—the King—in my ear—close, close !”

“Our last news were confident that he had escaped from Bristol.”

“Thank God for that—thank God for that !” said the knight. “Where didst thou leave him ?”

“Our men were almost all cut to pieces at the bridge,” Albert replied ; “but I followed his Majesty with about five hundred other officers and gentlemen, who were resolved to die around him, until, as our numbers and appearance drew the whole pursuit after us, it pleased his Majesty to dismiss us, with many thanks and w

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of comfort to us in general, and some kind expressions to most of us in especial. He sent his royal greeting to you, sir, in particular, and said more than becomes me to repeat."

"Nay, I will hear it every word, boy," said Sir Henry ; "is not the certainty that thou hast discharged thy duty, and that King Charles owns it, enough to console me for all we have lost and suffered, and wouldst thou stint me of it from a false shamefacedness? —I will have it out of thee, were it drawn from thee with cords !"

"It shall need no such compulsion," said the young man—"It was his Majesty's pleasure to bid me tell Sir Henry Lee, in his name, that if his son could not go before his father in the race of loyalty, he was at least following him closely, and would soon move side by side."

"Said he so?" answered the knight—"Old Victor Lee will look down with pride on thee, Albert !—But I forget—you must be weary and hungry."

"Even so, sir," said Albert ; "but these are things which of late I have been in the habit of enduring for safety's sake."

"Joceline !—what ho, Joceline !"

The under-keeper entered, and received orders to get supper prepared directly.

"My son and Dr. Rochecliffe are half starving," said the knight.

"And there is a lad, too, below," said Joceline ; "a page, he says, of Colonel Albert's, whose belly rings cupboard too, and that to no common tune ; for I think he could eat a horse, as the Yorkshireman says, behind the saddle. He had better eat at the sideboard ; for he has devoured a whole loaf of bread and butter, as fast as Phæbe could cut it, and it has not staid his stomach for a minute—and truly I think you had better keep him

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was a tall, rawboned lad, with a shock head of fiery red, like many of his country, while the harshness of his national features was increased by the colour of his complexion, turned almost black by the exposure to all sorts of weather, which, in that skulking and rambling mode of life, the fugitive royalists had been obliged to encounter. His address was by no means prepossessing, being a mixture of awkwardness and forwardness, and showing in a remarkable degree how a want of easy address may be consistent with an admirable stock of assurance. His face intimated having received some recent scratches, and the care of Dr. Rochecliffe had decorated it with a number of patches, which even enhanced its natural plainness. Yet the eyes were brilliant and expressive, and, amid his ugliness—for it amounted to that degree of irregularity—the face was not deficient in some lines which expressed both sagacity and resolution.

The dress of Albert himself was far beneath his quality, as the son of Sir Henry Lee, and commander of a regiment in the royal service; but that of his page was still more dilapidated. A disastrous green jerkin, which had been changed to a hundred hues by sun and rain, so that the original could scarce be discovered, huge clouterly shoes, leathern breeches—such as were worn by hedgers—coarse grey worsted stockings, were the attire of the honourable youth, whose limping gait, while it added to the ungainliness of his manner, showed, at the same time, the extent of his sufferings. His appearance bordered so much upon what is vulgarly called the queer, that even with Alice it would have excited some sense of ridicule, had not compassion been predominant.

*The grace was said, and the young squire of Ditchley, as well as Dr. Rochecliffe, made an excellent figure at a meal, the like of which, in quality and abundance, did*

— how many years have run since the Thirty-eight  
when the Scottish troubles first began, and I am at  
300

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hat you will not wonder that, while the Barons of Scotland have been, for one cause or other, perpetually in the field, the education of their children at home must have been much neglected, and that young men of my friend's age know better how to use a broadsword, or to toss a pike, than the decent ceremonials of society."

"The reason is a sufficient one," said the knight, "and, since thou sayest thy follower Kernigo can fight, we'll not let him lack victuals, a God's name.—See, he looks angrily still at yonder cold loin of mutton—for God's sake put it all on his plate!"

"I can bide the bit and the buffet," said the honourable Master Kerneguy—"a hungry tike ne'er minds a blaud with a rough bane."

"Now, God hae mercy, Albert, but if this be the son of a Scots peer," said Sir Henry to his son, in a low tone of voice, "I would not be the English ploughman who would change manners with him for his ancient blood, and his nobility, and his estate to boot, an he has one.—He has eaten, as I am a Christian, near four pounds of solid butcher's meat, and with the grace of a wolf tugging at the carcass of a dead horse.—Oh, he is about to drink at last—Soh!—he wipes his mouth, though, and dips his fingers in the ewer—and dries them, I profess, with the napkin!—there is some grace in him, after all."

"Here is wussing all your vera gude healths!" said the youth of quality, and took a draught in proportion to the solids which he had sent before; he then flung his knife and fork awkwardly on the trencher, which he pushed back towards the centre of the table, extended his feet beneath it till they rested on their heels, folded *his arms on his well-replenished stomach, and, lolling back in his chair, looked much as if he was about to whistle himself asleep.*

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"Soh!" said the knight—"the honourable Master Kernigo hath laid down his arms.—Withdraw these things, and give us our glasses—Fill them around, Joceline; and if the devil or the whole Parliament were within hearing, let them hear Henry Lee of Ditchley drink a health to King Charles, and confusion to his enemies."

"Amen!" said a voice from behind the door.

All the company looked at each other in astonishment, at a response so little expected. It was followed by a solemn and peculiar tap, such as a kind of freemasonry had introduced among royalists, and by which they were accustomed to make themselves and their principles known to each other, when they met by accident.

"There is no danger," said Albert, knowing the sign—"it is a friend;—yet I wish he had been at a greater distance just now."

"And why, my son, should you wish the absence of one true man, who may, perhaps, wish to share our abundance, on one of those rare occasions when we have superfluity at our disposal?—Go, Joceline, see who knocks—and, if a safe man, admit him."

"And if otherwise," said Joceline, "methinks I shall be able to prevent his troubling the good company."

"No violence, Joceline, on your life," said Albert Lee; and Alice echoed, "For God's sake, no violence!"

"No unnecessary violence at least," said the good old knight; "for if the time demands it, I will have it seen that I am master of my own house." Joceline Joliffe nodded assent to all parties, and went on tiptoe to exchange one or two other mysterious symbols and knocks, ere he opened the door. It may be here remarked, that this species of secret association, with its *signals of union*, existed among the more dissolute and *desperate class of cavaliers*, men habituated to the *dissipated life* which they had been accustomed to in an *undisciplined army*, where everything like order and

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was too apt to be accounted a badge of purl. These were the "roaring boys" who met in houses, and when they had by any chance obtained a little money or a little credit, determined to a counter-revolution by declaring their sittings, and proclaimed, in the words of one of their best ditties,—

We'll drink till we bring  
In triumph back the king.

The leaders and gentry, of a higher description and more regular morals, did not indeed partake such excesses, but they still kept their eye upon a class of persons, who, from courage and desperation, were capable of serving on an advantageous occasion the fallen cause of royalty; and recorded the lodges and blind taverns at which they met, as wholesale merchants know the houses of call of the mechanics whom they may have occasion to employ, and can tell where they may find them when need requires. It is scarcely necessary to add, that among the lower class, and sometimes even among the higher, there were men found capable of betraying the projects and conspiracies of their associates, whether well or indifferently combined, to the governors of the state. Cromwell, in particular, had gained some correspondents of this kind of the highest rank, and of the most undoubted character, among the royalists, who, if they made scruple of impeaching or betraying individuals who confided in them, had no hesitation in giving the government such general information as served to enable him to disappoint the purposes of any plot or conspiracy.

To return to our story. In much shorter time than we have spent in reminding the reader of these historical particulars, Joliffe had made his mystic communication; and being duly answered as by one of the initiated, he undid the door, and there entered our old friend Roger



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Wildrake, roundhead in dress, as his safety and his pence on Colonel Everard compelled him to be, that dress worn in a most cavalier-like manner, and forming a stronger contrast than usual with the demeanour and language of the wearer, to which it was never congenial.

His puritanic hat, the emblem of that of Ralpho the prints to Hudibras, or, as he called it, his umbrella, was set most knowingly on one side of head, as if it had been a Spanish hat and feather ; straight square-caped sad-coloured cloak was flung upon one shoulder, as if it had been of three-pi taffeta, lined with crimson silk ; and he paraded his half-calf-skin boots, as if they had been silken hose ; Spanish leather shoes, with roses on the instep. short, the airs which he gave himself, of a most thorough-paced wild gallant and cavalier, joined to a glistening self-satisfaction in his eye, and an inimitable swagger in his gait, which completely announced his thoughtless conceited, and reckless character, formed a most ridiculous contrast to his gravity of attire.

It could not, on the other hand, be denied, that in spite of the touch of ridicule which attached to his character, and the loose morality which he had learned the dissipation of town pleasures, and afterwards in the disorderly life of a soldier, Wildrake had points about him both to make him feared and respected. He was handsome, even in spite of his air of debauched effrontery ; a man of the most decided courage, though his vaunting rendered it sometimes doubtful ; and entertained a sincere sense of his political principles, such *they were*, though he was often so imprudent in asserting and boasting of them, as, joined with his dependence on Colonel Everard, induced prudent men to doubt his sincerity.

Such as he was, however, he entered the park

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, where his presence was anything but desirable parties present, with a jaunty step, and a consciousness of deserving the best possible reception. This was greatly aided by circumstances which rendered it obvious, that if the jocund cavalier had limited himself to one draught of liquor that evening, in terms of his vow of temperance, it must have been a very deep long one.

'Save ye, gentlemen, save ye.—Save you, good Sir Henry Lee, though I have scarce the honour to be known to you.—Save you, worthy doctor, and a speedy resurrection to the fallen Church of England.'

"You are welcome, sir," said Sir Henry Lee, whose feelings of hospitality, and of the fraternal reception due to a royalist sufferer, induced him to tolerate this intrusion more than he might have done otherwise. "If you have fought or suffered for the King, sir, it is an excuse for joining us, and commanding our services in anything in our power—although at present we are a family-party.—But I think I saw you in waiting upon Master Markham Everard, who calls himself Colonel Everard.—If your message is from him, you may wish to see me in private?"

"Not at all, Sir Henry, not at all.—It is true, as my ill hap will have it, that being on the stormy side of the hedge—like all honest men—you understand me, Sir Henry—I am glad, as it were, to gain something from my old friend and comrade's countenance—not by truckling or disowning my principles, sir—I defy such practices;—but, in short, by doing him any kindness in my power when he is pleased to call on me. So I came down here with a message from him to the old round-headed son of a —— (I beg the young lady's pardon, from the crown of her head down to the very toes of her slipper)—And so, sir, chancing as I was stumbling out in the dark. I heard you give a toast, sir, which warmed my heart.

x

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sir, and ever will, sir, till death chills it ;—and so I made bold to let you know there was an honest man within hearing."

Such was the self-introduction of Master Wildrake, to which the knight replied, by asking him to sit down, and take a glass of sack to his Majesty's glorious restoration. Wildrake, at this hint, squeezed in without ceremony beside the young Scotsman, and not only pledged his landlord's toast, but seconded its import, by volunteering a verse or two of his favourite loyal ditty,—“The King shall enjoy his own again.” The heartiness which he threw into his song opened still farther the heart of the old knight, though Albert and Alice looked at each other with looks resentful of the intrusion, and desirous to put an end to it. The Honourable Master Kerneguy either possessed that happy indifference of temper which does not deign to notice such circumstances, or he was able to assume the appearance of it to perfection, as he sat sipping sack, and cracking walnuts, without testifying the least sense that an addition had been made to the party. Wildrake, who liked the liquor and the company, showed no unwillingness to repay his landlord, by being at the expense of the conversation.

“You talk of fighting and suffering, Sir Henry Lee. Lord help us, we have all had our share. All the world knows what Sir Henry Lee has done from Edgefield downwards, wherever a loyal sword was drawn, or a loyal flag fluttered. Ah, God help us! I have done something too. My name is Roger Wildrake of Squattleseamere, Lincoln ; not that you are ever like to have heard it before, but I was Captain in Lundford's light-horse, and afterwards with Goring. I was a child-eater, sir, a babe-bolter.”

“I have heard of your regiment's exploits, sir ; and perhaps you may find I have seen some of them, if we could spend ten minutes together. And I think I have

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heard of your name too. I beg to drink your health, Captain Wildrake of Squattleseamere, Lincolnshire."

"Sir Henry, I drink yours in this pint bumper, and upon my knee; and I would do as much for that young gentleman"—(looking at Albert)—"and the squire of the green cassock too, holding it for green, as the colours are not to my eyes altogether clear and distinguishable."

It was a remarkable part of what is called by theatrical folk the by-play of this scene, that Albert was conversing apart with Dr. Rochecliffe in whispers, even more than the divine seemed desirous of encouraging; yet, to whatever their private conversation referred, it did not deprive the young Colonel of the power of listening to what was going forward in the party at large, and interfering from time to time, like a watch-dog, who can distinguish the slightest alarm, even when employed in the engrossing process of taking his food.

"Captain Wildrake," said Albert, "we have no objection—I mean, my friend and I—to be communicative on proper occasions; but you, sir, who are so old a sufferer, must needs know, that at such casual meetings as this men do not mention their names unless they are specially wanted. It is a point of conscience, sir, to be able to say, if your principal, Captain Everard, or Colonel Everard, if he be a Colonel, should examine you upon oath, I did not know who the persons were whom I heard drink such and such toasts."

"Faith, I have a better way of it, worthy sir," answered Wildrake; "I never can, for the life of me, remember that there were any such and such toasts drunk at all. It's a strange gift of forgetfulness I have."

"Well, sir," replied the younger Lee; "but we, who *have unhappily* more tenacious memories, would *willingly abide* by the more general rule."

"Oh, sir," answered Wildrake, "with all my he

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I intrude on no man's confidence, d—n me—and I only spoke for civility's sake, having the purpose of drinking your health in a good fashion."—(Then he broke forth into melody)—

Then let the health go round, a-round, a-round, a-round,  
Then let the health go round ;  
For though your stocking be of silk,  
Your knee shall kiss the ground, a-ground, aground, aground,  
Your knee shall kiss the ground.

"Urge it no farther," said Sir Henry, addressing his son ; " Master Wildrake is one of the old school—one of the tantivy boys ; and we must bear a little, for if they drink hard they fought well. I will never forget how a party came up and rescued us clerks of Oxford, as they called the regiment I belonged to, out of a cursed embroglio during the attack on Brentford. I tell you we were enclosed with the cockneys' pikes both front and rear, and we should have come off but ill had not Lunsford's light-horse, the babe-eaters as they called them, charged up to the pike's point, and brought us off."

"I am glad you thought on that, Sir Henry," said Wildrake ; " and do you remember what the officer of Lunsford's said ? "

"I think I do," said Sir Henry smiling.

"Well, then, did not he call out, when the women were coming down, howling like sirens as they were—  
'Have none of you a plump child that you could give us to break our fast upon?'"

"Truth itself!" said the knight ; " and a great fat woman stepped forward with a baby, and offered it to the supposed cannibal."

All at the table, Master Kerneguy excepted, who seemed to think that good food of any kind required no apology, held up their hands in token of amazement.  
"Ay," said Wildrake, " the —— a-hem !—I crave the

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pardon again, from tip of top-knot to hem of gale—but the cursed creature proved to be a parish who had been paid for the child half-a-year in fee. Gad, I took the babe out of the bitch-wolf's ; and I have contrived, though God knows I have in a skeldering sort of way myself, to breed up d Breakfast, as I call him, ever since. It was paying ar for a jest, though."

"Sir, I honour you for your humanity," said the old knight—"Sir, I thank you for your courage—Sir, I am glad to see you here," said the good knight, his eyes watering almost to overflowing. "So you were the wild officer who cut us out of the toils ; oh, sir, had you but stopped when I called on you, and allowed us to clear the streets of Brentford with our musketeers, we would have been at London Stone that day ! But your good will was the same."

"Ay, truly was it," said Wildrake, who now sat triumphant and glorious in his easy-chair ; "and here is to all the brave hearts, sir, that fought and fell in that same storm of Brentford. We drove all before us like chaff, till the shops, where they sold strong waters, and other temptations, brought us up. Gad, sir, we, the babe-eaters, had too many acquaintances in Brentford, and our stout Prince Rupert was ever better at making way than drawing off. Gad, sir, for my own poor share, I did but go into the house of a poor widow lady, who maintained a charge of daughters, and whom I had known of old, to get my horse fed, a morsel of meat, and so forth, when these cockney pikes of the artillery ground, as you very well call them, rallied, and came in with their armed heads, as boldly as so many Cotswold rams. I sprang down stairs, got to my horse,—but, egad, I fancy all my troop had widows and orphan maidens to comfort as well as I, only five of us got together. We cut our way thro

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d, Gad, gentlemen, I carried my little pommel before me ; and there was such screeching, as if the whole town thought

ist, and eat the poor child, so soon as I But devil a cockney charged up to my lass, to rescue little cake-bread ; they and out upon me."

" said the knight, " we made ourselves we were ; and we were too bad to de-ssing even in a good cause. But it is back—we did not deserve victories when for we never improved them like good

Christian men ; and so we gave these els the advantage of us, for they assumed, scrisy, the discipline and orderly beha-who drew our swords in a better cause, practised out of true principle. But

d, Captain. I have often wished to see r who charged up so smartly in our be-ence you for the care you took of the m glad this dilapidated place has still to offer you, although we cannot treat abes or stewed sucklings—eh Captain !"

-lenry, the scandal was sore against us I remember Lacy, who was an old play-utenant in ours, made drollery on it was sometimes acted at Oxford, when something up, called, I think, the Old

d feeling more familiar as his merits hitched his chair up against that of who was seated next him, and who, ace, was awkward enough to disturb, in Lee, who sat opposite, and, a little st embarrassed, drew her chair awa

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"e pardon," said the Honourable Master Kerne-  
ut, sir," to Master Wildrake, "ye hae e'en  
e hurt the young lady's shank."

ve your pardon, sir, and much more that of the  
as is reasonable ; though, rat me, sir, if it was  
ir chair a-trundling in that way. Zooks, sir, I  
ught with me no plague, nor pestilence, nor  
ectious disorder, that ye should have started  
f I had been a leper, and discomposed the lady,  
would have prevented with my life, sir. Sir, if  
rthern born, as your tongue bespeaks, egad, it  
t the risk in drawing near you ; so there was  
son for you to bolt."

ter Wildrake," said Albert, interfering, "this  
entleman is a stranger as well as you, under  
n of Sir Henry's hospitality, and it cannot be  
: for my father to see disputes arise among his  
You may mistake the young gentleman's quality  
present appearance—this is the Honourable  
ouis Kerneguy, sir, son of my Lord Killstewers  
rdineshire, one who has fought for the King,  
he is."

dispute shall rise through me, sir—none through  
d Wildrake ; "your exposition sufficeth, sir.  
Louis Gernigo, son of my Lord Killsteer, in  
enshire, I am your humble slave, sir, and drink  
lth, in token that I honour you, and all true  
to draw their Andrew Ferraras on the right side,

beholden to you, and thank you, sir," said the  
ian, with some haughtiness of manner, which  
orresponded with his rusticity ; "and I wuss  
lth in a ceevil way."

udicious persons would have here dropped the  
ion ; but it was one of Wildrake's marked pecu-  
that he could never let matters stand when they





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es on your honourable visnomy, I should augur  
ou had been of late at misunderstanding with the  
?"

ou are mistaken, then, friend, for it was with the  
," answered the Scotsman, dryly, and cast a look  
rds Albert.

We had some trouble with the watch-dogs in enter-  
; so late in the evening," said Albert, in explanation,  
and this youth had a fall among some rubbish, by  
which he came by these scratches."

"And now, dear Sir Henry," said Dr. Rochecliffe,  
"allow us to remind you of your gout, and our long  
journey. I do it the rather that my good friend your  
son has been, during the whole time of supper, putting  
questions to me aside, which had much better be reserved  
till to-morrow—May we therefore ask permission to retire  
to our night's rest?"

"These private committees in a merry meeting," said  
Wildrake, "are a solecism in breeding. They always  
put me in mind of the cursed committees at Westmin-  
ster.—But shall we to roost before we rouse the night-owl  
with a catch?"

"Aha, canst thou quote Shakspeare?" said Sir  
Henry, pleased at discovering a new good quality in his  
acquaintance, whose military services were otherwise but  
just able to counterbalance the intrusive freedom of his  
conversation. "In the name of merry Will," he con-  
tinued,—"whom I never saw, though I have seen many of  
his comrades, as Alleyn, Hemmings, and so on—we will  
have a single catch, and one rouse about, and then to bed."

After the usual discussion about the choice of the  
song, and the parts which each was to bear, they united  
their voices in trolling a loyal glee, which was popular  
among the party at the time, and in fact believed to  
be composed by no less a person than Dr. Rochecliffe  
himself.

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### GLEE FOR KING CHARLES.

Bring the bowl which you boast,  
Fill it up to the brim ;  
'Tis to him we love most,  
And to all who love him.  
Brave gallants, stand up,  
And avaunt, ye base carles !  
Were there death in the cup,  
Here's a health to King Charles !

Though he wanders through dangers,  
Unaided, unknown,  
Dependent on strangers,  
Estranged from his own ;  
Though 'tis under our breath,  
Amidst forfeits and perils,  
Here's to honour and faith,  
And a health to King Charles !

Let such honours abound  
As the time can afford,  
The knee on the ground,  
And the hand on the sword ;  
But the time shall come round,  
When 'mid Lords, Dukes, and Earls,  
The loud trumpets shall sound  
Here's a health to King Charles !

After this display of loyalty, and a final libation party took leave of each other for the night. Sir F. offered his old acquaintance Wildrake a bed for the evening, who weighed the matter somewhat in this fashion : " Why, to speak the truth, my patron expects me at the borough—but then he is used to staying out of doors a-nights. Then there's the story that they say haunts Woodstock ; but with the blessing of this reverend Doctor, I defy him and all his woe. I saw him not when I slept here twice before, and were if he was absent then, he has not come back. Henry Lee and his family. So I accept

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Sir Henry, and I thank you  
should thank one of the  
God bless the King ! I can  
confusion to Noll and his red nose  
angly with a bottle-swagger, &  
from Albert, in the meantime,  
are to quarter him far enough from  
ily.

Young Lee then saluted his sister,  
quality of those times, asked and re-  
blessing with an affectionate embrace  
desirous to imitate one part of his  
repelled by Alice, who only replied to  
with a curtesy. He next bowed his  
ward fashion to her father, who was  
night. " I am glad to see, young man,  
you have at least learned the reverence  
should always be paid, sir ; because  
render that honour to others which you  
self to receive when you approach the  
More will I speak with you at leisure  
as a page, which office in former days  
very school of chivalry ; whereas of  
orderly times, it has become little but  
of wild and disordered license ; which  
Jonson exclaim "——

" Nay, father," said Albert, inter-  
consider this day's fatigue, and the  
asleep on his legs—to-morrow he will  
profit to your kind admonitions.—A  
member at least one part of your duty  
and light us—here Joceline comes to  
Once more, good-night, good Dr.  
*night, all."*



## WOODSTOCK.

crewed on to the staple in such a manner impossible to withdraw it, or open it breaking it down. The page held a the operation, which his master went exactness and dexterity. But when his knee, on which he had rested during the performance of this task, the manner of it was on the sudden entirely changed. The Honourable Master Kerneguy, out of a raw Scotchman, seemed to possess once all the grace and ease of motion which could be given by an acquaintance of the most familiar kind with the best corner.

At the light he held to Albert with the air of a superior, who rather graces than humiliates by giving him some slight service. Albert, with the greatest appearance of composure, turned in his turn the character of tormentor. He took his page across the chamber, without looking upon him as he did so. He then went to the table by the bedside, and approached with deep reverence, received from him a paper in jacket, with the same profound respect. He had been a first lord of the bedchamber, and now he was the household of the highest distinction. The Sovereign of the Mantle of the Garter, to whom this ceremony was addressed, spoke in a minute or two with profound gravity, and then, without a-laughing, exclaimed to Albert, "What means all this formality?—thou comparest these miserable rags as if they were silks and furs to poor Louis Kerneguy as if he were a King of Britain!"

"Your Majesty's commands, and the time, have made me for a moment forget myself."

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to forget that you are my sovereign, surely I may be permitted to render my homage as such while you are in your own royal palace of Woodstock?"

"Truly," replied the disguised Monarch, "the sovereign and the palace are not ill matched;—these tattered hangings and my ragged jerkin suit each other admirably.—*This* Woodstock!—*this* the bower where the royal Norman revelled with the fair Rosamond Clifford!—Why, it is a place of assignation for owls!" Then, suddenly recollecting himself, with his natural courtesy, he added, as if fearing he might have hurt Albert's feelings—"But the more obscure and retired, it is the fitter for our purpose, Lee; and if it does seem to be a roost for owls, as there is no denying, why we know it has nevertheless brought up eagles."

He threw himself as he spoke upon a chair, and indolently, but gracefully, received the kind offices of Albert, who undid the coarse buttonings of the leathern garmashes which defended his legs, and spoke to him the whilst:—"What a fine specimen of the olden time is your father, Sir Henry! It is strange I should not have seen him before;—but I heard my father often speak of him as being among the flower of our real old English gentry. By the mode in which he began to school me, I can guess you had a tight taskmaster of him, Albert—I warrant you never wore hat in his presence, eh?"

"I never cocked it at least in his presence, please your Majesty, as I have seen some youngsters do," answered Albert; "indeed if I had it must have been a stout beaver to have saved me from a broken head."

"Oh, I doubt it not," replied the King; "a fine old gentleman—but with that, methinks, in his countenance, that assures you he would not hate the child in sparing the rod.—Hark ye, Albert—Suppose the same glorious

## WOODSTOCK.

tion come round—which, if drinking to its arrival  
sten it, should not be far distant,—for in that  
ular our adherents never neglect their duty,—sup-  
it come, therefore, and that thy father, as must be  
irse, becomes an Earl and one of the Privy Council,  
ish, man, I shall be as much afraid of him as ever  
my grandfather Henri Quatre of old Sully.—  
ine there were such a trinket now about the Court  
e Fair Rosamond, or La Belle Gabrielle, what a  
there would be of pages, and grooms of the  
ber, to get the pretty rogue clandestinely shuffled  
by the backstairs, like a prohibited commodity,  
the step of the Eart of Woodstock was heard in  
ntechamber !”

am glad to see your Majesty so merry after your  
ing journey.”

The fatigue was nothing, man,” said Charles ; “ a  
welcome and a good meal made amends for all

But they must have suspected thee of bringing a  
from the braes of Badenoch along with you, instead  
two-legged being, with no more than the usual  
ance of mortal stowage for provisions. I was really  
ned of my appetite ; but thou knowest I had eat  
ng for twenty-four hours, save the raw egg you stole  
ne from the old woman's hen-roost—I tell thee I  
ed to show myself so ravenous before that high-  
and respectable old gentleman your father, and the  
pretty girl your sister—or cousin, is she ? ”

She is my sister,” said Albert Lee, drily, and added,  
e same breath, “ Your Majesty's appetite suited  
enough with the character of a raw northern lad.—  
ld your Majesty now please to retire to rest ? ”

Not for a minute or two,” said the King, retaining  
at, “ Why, man, I have scarce had my tongue un-  
d to-day ; and to talk with that northern twan-  
sides, the fatigue of being obliged to speak ev



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word in character,—Gad, it's like walking as the galley-slaves do on the Continent, with a twenty-four pound shot chained to their legs—they may drag it along, but they cannot move with comfort. And, by the way, thou art slack in paying me my well deserved tribute of compliments on my counterfeiting.—Did I not play Louis Kerneguy as round as a ring?"

"If your Majesty asks my serious opinion, perhaps I may be forgiven if I say your dialect was somewhat too coarse for a Scottish youth of high birth, and your behaviour perhaps a little too churlish. I thought too—though I pretend not to be skilful—that some of your Scottish sounded as if it were not genuine."

"Not genuine?—there is no pleasing thee, Albert.—Why, who should speak genuine Scottish but myself? Was I not their King for a matter of ten months? and if I did not get knowledge of their language, I wonder what else I got by it. Did not east country, and south country, and west country, and Highlands, caw, croak, and shriek about me, as the deep guttural, the broad drawl, and the high sharp yelp predominated by turns?—Oddsfish, man, have I not been speeched at by their orators, addressed by their senators, rebuked by their kirkmen? Have I not sat on the cutty-stool, mon [again assuming the northern dialect], and thought it grace of worthy Mas John Gillespie, that I was permitted to do penance in mine own privy chamber, instead of the face of the congregation? and wilt thou tell me, after all, that I cannot speak Scotch enough, to baffle an Oxon Knight and his family?"

"May it please your Majesty,—I began by saying I *was no judge of the Scottish language.*"

"*Pshaw—it is mere envy; just so you said at Norton's that I was too courteous and civil for a young page—now you think me too rude.*"

"*And there is a medium, if one could find it,*" said

ending his opinion in the same tone in which attacked him ; "so this morning, when you in the woman's dress, you raised your petticoats unbecomingly high, as you waded through the stream ; and when I told you of it, to mend it, you dragged through the next without raising at all."

"O, the devil take the woman's dress !" said Charles ; "I hope I shall never be driven to that disguise again. My ugly face was enough to put gowns, caps, and ruffles, out of fashion for ever—the very dogs fled from me—Had I passed any hamlet that had but five huts in it, I could not have escaped the cucking-stool.—I was a libel on womanhood. These leathern conveniences are none of the gayest, but they are *propria quæ maribus* ; and right glad am I to be repossessed of them. I can tell you too, my friend, I shall resume all my masculine privileges with my proper habiliments ; and as you say I have been too coarse to-night, I will behave myself like a courtier to Mistress Alice to-morrow. I made a sort of acquaintance with her already, when I seemed to be of the same sex with herself, and found out there are other Colonels in the wind besides you, Colonel Albert Lee."

"May it please your Majesty," said Albert—and then stopped short, from the difficulty of finding words to express the unpleasant nature of his feelings. They could not escape Charles ; but he proceeded without scruple. "I pique myself on seeing as far into the hearts of young ladies as most folk, though God knows they are sometimes too deep for the wisest of us. But I mentioned to your sister in my character of fortune-teller,—thinking, poor simple man, that a country girl must have no one but her brother to dream about,—that she was anxious about a certain Colonel. I had hit the theme, but not the person ; for I alluded to you."

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Albert ; and I presume the blush was too deep ever to be given to a brother. So up she got, and away she flew from me like a lapwing.—I can excuse her, for, looking at myself in the well, I think if I had met such a creature as I seemed, I should have called fire and fagot against it.—Now, what think you, Albert—who can this Colonel be, that more than rivals you in your sister's affection ? ”

Albert, who well knew that the King's mode of thinking, where the fair sex was concerned, was far more gay than delicate, endeavoured to put a stop to the present topic by a grave answer.

“ His sister,” he said, “ had been in some measure educated with the son of her maternal uncle, Markham Everard ; but as his father and he himself had adopted the cause of the roundheads, the families had in consequence been at variance ; and any projects which might have been formerly entertained were of course long since dismissed on all sides.”

“ You are wrong, Albert, you are wrong,” said the King, pitilessly pursuing his jest. “ You Colonels, whether you wear blue or orange sashes, are too pretty fellows to be dismissed so easily, when once you have acquired an interest. But Mistress Alice, so pretty, and who wishes the restoration of the King with such a look and accent, as if she were an angel whose prayers must needs bring it down, must not be allowed to retain any thoughts of a canting roundhead—What say you—will you give me leave to take her to task about it?—After all, I am the party most concerned in maintaining true allegiance among my subjects ; and if I gain the pretty maiden's good will, that of the sweetheart will soon follow. This was jolly King Edward's way—Edward the Fourth, you know. The king-making Earl of Warwick—the Cromwell of his day—dethroned him more than once ; but he had the hearts of the merry

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London, and the purses and vein  
bled freely, till they brought him hor  
you?—shall I shake off my northern  
ak with Alice in my own character, show  
on and manners have done for me, to  
mends they can for an ugly face?"

"May it please your Majesty," said Albe  
red and embarrassed tone, "I did not exp  
Here he stopped, not able to find words ad  
e same time to express his sentiments, and  
nough to the King, while in his father's ho  
under his own protection.

"And what is it that Master Lee does not  
said Charles with marked gravity on his part.

Again Albert attempted a reply, but adv  
farther than, "I would hope, if it please your  
—when he again stopped short, his deep and l  
respect for his sovereign, and his sense of the h  
due to his misfortunes, preventing his giving  
to his irritated feelings.

"And what does Colonel Albert Lee hop  
Charles, in the same dry and cold manner in  
had before spoken.—"No answer?—Now, /  
Colonel Lee does not see in a silly jest anything  
to the honour of his family, since methinks tha  
indifferent compliment to his sister, his father,  
self, not to mention Charles Stuart, whom he  
King; and *I expect*, that I shall not be so ha  
strued, as to be supposed capable of forgetting  
tress Alice Lee is the daughter of my faithfu  
and host, and the sister of my guide and pr  
Come, come, Albert," he added, changing a  
his naturally frank and unceremonious man  
*forget how long I have been abroad, where n*  
*and children, talk gallantry, morning, noon*  
*with no more serious thought than just*

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the time ; and I forget, too, that you are of the old-fashioned English school, a son after Sir Henry's own heart, and don't understand raillery upon such subjects. —But I ask your pardon, Albert, sincerely, if I have really hurt you."

So saying, he extended his hand to Colonel Lee, who, feeling he had been rather too hasty in construing the King's jest in an unpleasant sense, kissed it with reverence, and attempted an apology.

"Not a word—not a word," said the good-natured Prince, raising his penitent adherent as he attempted to kneel ; "we understand each other. You are somewhat afraid of the gay reputation which I acquired in Scotland ; but I assure you, I will be as stupid as you or your cousin Colonel could desire, in presence of Mistress Alice Lee, and only bestow my gallantry, should I have any to throw away, upon the pretty little waiting-maid who attended at supper—unless you should have monopolised her ear for your own benefit, Colonel Albert?"

"It is monopolised, sure enough, though not by me, if it please your Majesty, but by Joceline Joliffe, the under-keeper, whom we must not disoblige, as we have trusted him so far already, and may have occasion to repose even entire confidence in him. I half think he suspects who Louis Kerneguy may in reality be."

"You are an engrossing set, you wooers of Woodstock," said the King, laughing. "Now, if I had a fancy, as a Frenchman would not fail to have in such a case, to make pretty speeches to the deaf old woman I saw in the kitchen, as a *pisaller*, I dare say I should be told that *her* ear was engrossed for Dr. Rochecliffe's sole use?"

"I marvel at your Majesty's good spirits," said Albert, "*that after a day of danger, fatigue, and accidents, you should feel the power of amusing yourself thus.*"

"That is to say, the groom of the chambers wishes his Majesty would go to sleep?—Well, one word or two on

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business, and I have done—I have been commanded by you and Rochecliffe—I have changed from female to male upon the instant, and destination from Hampshire to take shelter—still hold it the wiser course?"

"Great confidence in Dr. Rochecliffe," replied the acquaintance with the scattered royalists to gain the most accurate intelligence. His content of his correspondence, and the comical plots and schemes for your Majesty's need the very food he lives upon; but his equal to his vanity. I repose, besides, the on Joliffe. Of my father and sister I would yet I would not, without reason, extend the your Majesty's person farther than it is unnecessary."

"Come in me," said Charles, pausing, "to all confidence from Sir Henry Lee?"

"My lady heard of his almost death-swoon of last would agitate him most deeply must not be indicated."

"Are we safe from a visit of the red-coats—in Woodstock as well as in Oxford?"

"He says, not unwisely," answered Lee, sitting near the fire when the chimney at Woodstock, so lately in possession of and still in the vicinity of the soldiers, had, and more carelessly searched, than others which might seem to promise more was added, "Rochecliffe is in possession of important news concerning the state of the king, highly favourable to your Majesty's residence at the palace for two or three days, till the meeting of the Parliament, or usurping Council, and the removal of the king down sequestrators, whom their

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own evil conscience, assisted, perhaps by the tricks of some daring cavaliers, had frightened out of the Lodge, without much desire to come back again. Then the more formidable usurper, Cromwell, had granted a warrant of possession to Colonel Everard, who had only used it for the purpose of repossessing his uncle in the Lodge, and who kept watch in person at the little borough, to see that Sir Henry was not disturbed."

"What! Mistress Alice's Colonel?" said the King—"that sounds alarming;—for grant that he keeps the other fellows at bay, think you not, Master Albert, he will have an hundred errands a-day to bring him here in person?"

"Dr. Rochecliffe says," answered Lee, "the treaty between Sir Henry and his nephew binds the latter not to approach the Lodge, unless invited;—indeed, it was not without great difficulty, and strongly arguing the good consequences it might produce to your Majesty's cause, that my father could be prevailed on to occupy Woodstock at all; but be assured he will be in no hurry to send an invitation to the Colonel."

"And be you assured that the Colonel will come without waiting for one," said Charles. "Folk cannot judge rightly where sisters are concerned—they are too familiar with the magnet to judge of its powers of attraction. Everard will be here, as if drawn by cart-ropes—fettered not to talk of promises, will not hold him—and I think, we are in some danger."

"I hope not," said Albert. "In the first place, I know Markham is a slave to his word; besides, were any chance to bring him here, I think I could pass your Majesty upon him without difficulty, as Louis Kerneguy, although my cousin and I have not been on good terms for these some years, I believe him incapable of betraying your Majesty; and lastly, if I saw the least danger, would, were he ten times the son of my mother

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and through his body ere he had time to execute it."

"It is but another question," said Charles, "and please you, Albert :—You seem to think yourself free from search. It may be so ; but, in any other way, this tale of goblins which is flying about would lead down priests and ministers of justice to examine the truth of the story, and mobs of idle people to satisfy their curiosity."

"Respecting the first, sir, we hope and understand that Colonel Everard's influence will prevent any immediate inquiry, for the sake of preserving the undisturbed peace of his uncle's family ; and as for any one coming without some sort of authority, the whole neighbours have so much love and fear of my father, and are, besides, so horribly alarmed about the goblins of Woodstock, that fear will silence curiosity."

"On the whole, then," said Charles, "the chances of safety seemed to be in favour of the plan we have adopted, which is all I can hope for in a condition where absolute safety is out of the question. The Bishop recommended Dr. Rochecliffe as one of the most ingenious, boldest, and most loyal sons of the Church of England ; you, Albert Lee, have marked your fidelity by a hundred proofs. To you and your local knowledge I submit myself.—And now prepare our arms—alive I will not be taken ; yet I will not believe that a son of the King of England, and heir of her throne, could be destined to danger in his own palace, and under the guard of the loyal Lees."

Albert Lee laid pistols and swords in readiness by the King's bed and his own ; and Charles, after some slight apology, took his place in the larger and better bed, with a sigh of pleasure, as from one who had not lately enjoyed such an indulgence. He bid good night to his faithful attendant, who deposited himself on his truckle ; and both monarch and subject were soon fast asleep.



Albert<sup>17</sup> answered the poor King, endeavouring in w  
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part of his clothes, in order to traverse the  
When a King's doublet and hose are so ragged  
in no more find his way into them than he could  
welled through the forest of Deane without a  
good faith, there should be an end of Majesty,  
t chances to be better accommodated. Besides,  
is the chance of these big words bolting out at un-  
res, when there are ears to hear them whom we might  
ak dangerous."

"Your commands shall be obeyed," said Lee, who  
had now succeeded in opening the door; from which he  
took his departure, leaving the King, who had hustled  
along the floor for that purpose, with his dress wofully  
ill arranged, to make it fast again behind him, and  
begging him in no case to open to any one, unless he or  
Rochecliffe were of the party who summoned him.

Albert then set out in quest of Dr. Rochecliffe's apart-  
ment, which was only known to himself and the faithful  
Joliffe, and had at different times accommodated that  
steady churchman with a place of concealment, when,  
from his bold and busy temper, which led him into the  
most extensive and hazardous machinations on the King's  
behalf, he had been strictly sought after by the opposite  
party. Of late, the inquest after him had died entirely  
away, as he had prudently withdrawn himself from the  
scene of his intrigues. Since the loss of the battle of Wor-  
cester, he had been afloat again, and more active than  
ever; and had, by friends and correspondents, and  
especially the Bishop of —, been the means of directing  
the King's flight towards Woodstock, although it was  
not until the very day of his arrival that he could promise  
him a safe reception at that ancient mansion.

Albert Lee, though he revered both the undaunted  
spirit and ready resources of the bustling and intriguing  
churchman, felt he had not been enabled by him to  
answer some of Charles's questions yesternight, in a way

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so distinct as one trusted with the King's safety ought to have done ; and it was now his object to make himself personally acquainted, if possible, with the various bearings of so weighty a matter, as became a man on whom so much of the responsibility was likely to descend.

Even his local knowledge was scarce adequate to find the Doctor's secret apartment, had he not traced his way after a genial flavour of roasted game through divers blind passages, and up and down certain very useless stairs, through cupboards and hatchways, and so forth, to a species of sanctum sanctorum, where Joceline Joliffe was ministering to the good Doctor a solemn breakfast of wild-fowl, with a cup of small beer stirred with a sprig of rosemary, which Dr. Rochecliffe preferred to all strong potations. Beside him sat Bevis on his tail, slobbering and looking amiable, moved by the rare smell of the breakfast, which had quite overcome his native dignity of disposition.

The chamber in which the Doctor had established himself was a little octangular room, with walls of great thickness, within which were fabricated various issues, leading in different directions, and communicating with different parts of the building. Around him were packages with arms, and near him one small barrel, as it seemed, of gunpowder ; many papers in different parcels, and several keys for correspondence in cipher ; two or three scrolls covered with hieroglyphics were also beside him, which Albert took for plans of nativity ; and various models of machinery, in which Dr. Rochecliffe was an adept. There were also tools of various kinds, masks, cloaks, and a dark lantern, and a number of other indescribable trinkets belonging to the trade of a daring plotter *in dangerous times*. Last, there was a casket with gold and silver coin of different countries, which was left carelessly open, as if it were the least of Dr. Rochecliffe's concern, although his habits in general announced narrow

just did my supper last night.  
questions?"

- "I will pick a bone with you with all my heart," said Albert; "and if you please, Doctor, I would ask some questions which seem not quite untimely."

So saying, he sat down and assisted the Doctor in giving a very satisfactory account of a brace of wild ducks and a leash of teal. Bevis, who maintained his place with great patience and insinuation, had his share of a collop, which was also placed on the well-furnished board; for, like most high-bred dogs, he declined eating waterfowl.

"Come hither, then, Albert Lee," said the Doctor, laying down his knife and fork, and plucking the towel from his throat, so soon as Joceline was withdrawn; "thou art still the same lad thou wert when I was thy tutor—never satisfied with having got a grammar rule, but always persecuting me with questions why the rule stood so, and not otherwise—over curious after information *which thou couldst not comprehend*, as Bevis slobbered *and whined for the duck-wing, which he could not eat.*"  
"I hope you will find me more reasonable, Doctor."

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answered Albert ; " and, at the same time, that you will recollect I am not now *sub ferula* ; but am placed in circumstances where I am not at liberty to act upon the *ipse dixit* of any man, unless my own judgment be convinced. I shall deserve richly to be hanged, drawn, and quartered, should any misfortune happen by my misgovernment in this business."

" And it is therefore, Albert, that I would have thee trust the whole to me, without interfering. Thou sayest, forsooth, thou art not *sub ferula* ; but recollect that while you have been fighting in the field, I have been plotting in the study—that I know all the combinations of the King's friends, ay, and all the motions of his enemies, as well as a spider knows every mesh of his web. Think of my experience, man. Not a cavalier in the land but has heard of Rochecliffe the Plotter. I have been a main limb in everything that has been attempted since forty-two—penned declarations, conducted correspondence, communicated with chiefs, recruited followers, commissioned arms, levied money, appointed rendezvouses. I was in the Western Rising ; and before that, in the City Petition, and in Sir John Owen's stir in Wales ; in short, almost in every plot for the King since Tomkins and Challoner's matter."

" But were not all these plots unsuccessful?" said Albert ; " and were not Tomkins and Challoner hanged, Doctor?"

" Yes, my young friend," answered the Doctor gravely, " as many others have been with whom I have acted ; but only because they did not follow my advice implicitly. You never heard that I was hanged myself."

" The time may come, Doctor," said Albert ; " the pitcher goes oft to the well—The proverb, as my father would say, is somewhat musty. But I, too, have some confidence in my own judgment ; and, much as I honour the Church, I cannot altogether subscribe to passive

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I will tell you in one word what points I  
explain on ; and it will remain with you  
to, or to return a message to the King that  
not explain your plan ; in which case, if he  
my advice, he will leave Woodstock, and  
his purpose of getting to the coast without  
."

Well, then," said the Doctor, "thou suspicious  
monster, make thy demands, and, if they be such as  
can answer without betraying confidence, I will reply  
to them."

"In the first place, then, what is all this story about  
ghosts, and witchcrafts, and apparitions? and do you  
consider it as safe for his Majesty to stay in a house  
subject to such visitations, real or pretended?"

"You must be satisfied with my answer *in verbo  
sacerdotis*—the circumstances you allude to will not give  
the least annoyance to Woodstock during the King's resi-  
dence. I cannot explain farther ; but for this I will be  
bound, at the risk of my neck."

"Then," said Lee, "we must take Dr. Rochecliffe's  
bail that the devil will keep the peace towards our  
Sovereign Lord the King—good. Now, there lurked  
about this house the greater part of yesterday, and  
perhaps slept here, a fellow called Tomkins—a bitter Inde-  
pendent, and a secretary or clerk, or something or other,  
to the regicide dog Desborough. The man is well  
known—a wild ranter in religious opinions, but in  
private affairs far-sighted, cunning, and interested, even  
as any rogue of them all."

"Be assured we will avail ourselves of his crazy  
fanaticism to mislead his wicked cunning ;—a child may  
lead a hog if it has wit to fasten a cord to the ring in its  
nose," replied the Doctor.

"You may be deceived," said Albert ; "the age has  
many such as this fellow, whose views of the spiritual and

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temporal world are so different, that they resemble the eyes of a squinting man ; one of which, oblique and distorted, sees nothing but the end of his nose, while the other, instead of partaking the same defect, views strongly, sharply, and acutely, whatever is subjected to its scrutiny."

"But we will put a patch on the better eye," said the Doctor, "and he shall be only allowed to speculate with the imperfect optic. You must know, this fellow has always seen the greatest number, and the most hideous apparitions ; he has not the courage of a cat in such matters, though stout enough when he hath temporal antagonists before him. I have placed him under the charge of Joceline Joliffe, who, betwixt plying him with sack and ghost stories, would make him incapable of knowing what was done, if you were to proclaim the King in his presence."

"But, why keep such a fellow here at all?"

"Oh, sir, content you ;—he lies leaguer, as a sort of ambassador for his worthy masters, and we are secure from any intrusion so long as they get all the news of Woodstock from Trusty Tomkins."

"I know Joceline's honesty well," said Albert ; "and if he can assure me that he will keep a watch over this fellow, I will so far trust in him. He does not know the depth of the stake, 'tis true, but that my life is concerned will be quite enough to keep him vigilant.—Well, then, I proceed :—What if Markham Everard comes down on us?"

"We have his word to the contrary," answered Rochecliffe—"his word of honour transmitted by his friend ;—Do you think it likely he will break it?"

"I hold him incapable of doing so," answered Albert ; "and, besides, I think Markham would make no bad use of anything which might come to his knowledge.—Yet God forbid we should be under the necessity of trust-

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to ever wore the Parliament's colours in a  
such dear concernment ! ”

“ Al ! ” said the Doctor.—“ Are your doubts  
now ? ”

“ till have an objection,” said Albert, “ to yonder  
gent rakehell fellow, styling himself a cavalier,  
pushed himself on our company last night, and  
wounded my father's heart by a story of the storm of  
Kentford, which, I dare say, the rogue never saw.”

“ You mistake him, dear Albert,” replied Rochecliffe  
—“ Roger Wildrake, although till of late I only knew  
him by name, is a gentleman, was bred at the Inns of  
Court, and spent his estate in the King's service.”

“ Or rather in the devil's service,” said Albert. “ It is  
such fellows as he, who, sunk from the license of their  
military habits into idle debauched ruffians, infest the  
land and with riots and robberies, brawl in hedge ale-houses,  
land cellars where strong waters are sold at midnight,  
and, with their deep oaths, their hot loyalty, and their  
drunken valour, make decent men abominate the very  
name of cavalier.”

“ Alas ! ” said the Doctor, “ it is but too true ; but  
what can you expect ? When the higher and more  
qualified classes are broken down and mingled undist-  
tinguishably with the lower orders, they are apt to lose  
the most valuable marks of their quality in the general  
confusion of morals and manners—just as a handful of  
silver medals will become defaced and discoloured if  
jumbled about among the vulgar copper coin. Even the  
prime medal of all, which we royalists would so willingly  
wear next our very hearts, has not, perhaps, entirely  
escaped some deterioration—But let other tongues than  
mine speak on that subject.”

Albert Lee paused deeply after having heard these  
communications on the part of Rochecliffe. “ Doctor  
he said, “ it is generally agreed, even by some who th



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you may occasionally have been a little overbusy in putting men upon dangerous actions "——

"May God forgive them who entertain so false an opinion of me," said the Doctor.

——"That, nevertheless, you have done and suffered more in the King's behalf than any man of your function."

"They do me but justice there," said Dr. Rochecliffe — "absolute justice."

"I am therefore disposed to abide by your opinion if, all things considered, you think it safe that we should remain at Woodstock."

"That is not the question," answered the divine.

"And what is the question, then?" replied the young soldier.

"Whether any safer course can be pointed out. I grieve to say, that the question must be comparative as to the point of option. Absolute safety is—alas!—while!—out of the question on all sides. Now, I say Woodstock is, fenced and guarded as at present, by far the most preferable place of concealment."

"Enough," replied Albert; "I give up to you the question, as to a person whose knowledge of such important affairs, not to mention your age and experience is more intimate and extensive than mine can be."

"You do well," answered Rochecliffe; "and if others had acted with the like distrust of their own knowledge and confidence in competent persons, it had been better for the age. This makes Understanding bar himself up within his fortalice, and Wit betake himself to his high tower." (Here he looked around his cell with an air of self-complacence.) "The wise man foreseeth the tempest and hideth himself."

"Doctor," said Albert, "let our foresight serve others far more precious than either of us. Let me ask you if you have well considered whether our precious cha

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ain in society with the family, or betake himself to the more hidden corners of the house?"

"I" said the Doctor, with an air of deep reflection, "I think he will be safest as Louis Kerneguy, himself close beside you"——

"I fear it will be necessary," added Albert, "that I go abroad a little, and show myself in some distant part of the country, lest, coming here in quest of me, I should find higher game."

"Pray do not interrupt me—Keeping himself close to you or your father, in or near to Victor Lee's apartment, from which you are aware he can make a ready escape, should danger approach. This occurs to me as best for the present—I hope to hear of the vessel to-day—or to-morrow at farthest."

Albert Lee bid the active but opinionated man good-morrow, admiring how this species of intrigue had become a sort of element in which the Doctor seemed to enjoy himself, notwithstanding all that the poet had said concerning the horrors which intervene betwixt the conception and execution of a conspiracy.

In returning from Dr. Rochecliffe's sanctuary, he met with Joceline, who was anxiously seeking him. "The young Scotch gentleman," he said, in a mysterious manner, "has arisen from bed, and, hearing me pass, he called me into his apartment."

"Well," replied Albert, "I will see him presently."

"And he asked me for fresh linen and clothes. Now, sir, he is like a man who is quite accustomed to be obeyed, so I gave him a suit which happened to be in a wardrobe in the west tower, and some of your linen to conform; and when he was dressed, he commanded me to show him to the presence of Sir Henry Lee and my young lady. I would have said something, sir, about waiting till you came back, but he pulled me good-naturedly by the hair (as, indeed, he has a rare humour

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of his own), and told me, he was guest to Master Albert Lee, and not his prisoner ; so, sir, though I thought you might be displeased with me for giving him the means of stirring abroad, and perhaps being seen by those who should not see him, what could I say ?”

“ You are a sensible fellow, Joceline, and comprehend always what is recommended to you. This youth will not be controlled, I fear, by either of us ; but we must look the closer after his safety. You keep your watch over that prying fellow the steward ?”

“ Trust him to my care—on that side have no fear. But ah, sir ! I would we had the young Scot in his old clothes again, for the riding suit of yours which he now wears hath set him off in other-guess fashion.”

From the manner in which the faithful dependant expressed himself, Albert saw that he suspected who the Scottish page in reality was ; yet he did not think it proper to acknowledge to him a fact of such importance, secure as he was equally of his fidelity, whether explicitly trusted to the full extent, or left to his own conjectures. Full of anxious thought, he went to the apartment of Victor Lee, in which Joliffe told him he would find the party assembled. The sound of laughter, as he laid his hand on the lock of the door, almost made him start, so singularly did it jar with the doubtful and melancholy reflections which engaged his own mind. He entered and found his father in high good humour, laughing and conversing freely with his young charge, whose appearance was, indeed, so much changed to the better in externals, that it seemed scarce possible a night's rest, a toilet, and a suit of decent clothes, could have done so much in his favour in so short a time. It could not, however, be imputed to the mere alteration of dress, although that, no doubt, had its effect. There was nothing splendid in that which Louis Kerneguy (we continue to call him by his assumed name) now wore. It was merely a riding suit

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oth, with some silver lace, in the fashion of a gentleman of the time. But it happened to fit well, and to become his very dark complexion, ally as he now held up his head, and used the ears, not only of a well-behaved, but of a highly-  
nplished gentleman. When he moved, his clumsy awkward limp was exchanged for a sort of shuffle, ach, as it might be the consequence of a wound those perilous times, had rather an interesting than n ungainly effect. At least it was as genteel an expression that the party had been over-hard travelled, as the most polite pedestrian could propose to himself.

The features of the Wanderer were harsh as ever, but his red shock peruke, for such it proved, was laid aside, his sable elf-locks were trained, by a little of Joceline's assistance, into curls, and his fine black eyes shone from among the shade of these curls, and corresponded with the animated, though not handsome, character of the whole head. In his conversation, he had laid aside all the coarseness of dialect which he had so strongly affected on the preceding evening ; and although he continued to speak a little Scotch, for the support of his character as a young gentleman of that nation, yet it was not in a degree which rendered his speech either uncouth or unintelligible, but merely afforded a certain Doric tinge essential to the personage he represented. No person on earth could better understand the society in which he moved ; exile had made him acquainted with life in all its shades and varieties—his spirits, if not uniform, were elastic—he had that species of Epicurean philosophy, which, even in the most extreme difficulties and dangers, can, in an interval of ease, however brief, avail itself of the enjoyments of the moment—he was, in short, *in youth and misfortune, as afterwards in his regal condition, a good-humoured but hard-hearted voluptuary—wise, save where his passions intervened—beneficent, save*

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entials of breakfast were at last removed, under the superintendence of the neat-handed Phoebe, and over her shoulder, and lingered more than listen to the fluent discourse of their new guest, on the preceding evening, she had, while in presence at supper, accounted one of the most stupid as to whom the gates of Woodstock had been closed since the times of Fair Rosamond.

Louis Kerneguy then, when they were left only four in the chamber, without the interruption of domestics, and the successive bustle occasioned by the discussion and removal of the morning meal, became apparently sensible, that his friend and ostensible patron Albert ought not altogether to be suffered to drop to leeward in the conversation, while he was himself successfully engaging the attention of those members of his family to whom he had become so recently known. He went behind his chair, therefore, and, leaning on the back, said with a good-humoured tone, which made his purpose entirely intelligible,—

“Either my good friend, guide, and patron, has heard worse news this morning than he cares to tell us, or he must have stumbled over my tattered jerkin and leathern hose, and acquired, by contact, the whole mass of stupidity which I threw off last night with those most dolorous garments. Cheer up, my dear Colonel Albert, if your affectionate page may presume to say so—you are in company with those whose society, dear to strangers, must be doubly so to you. Oddsfish, man, cheer up! I have seen you gay on a biscuit and a mouthful of watercresses—don't let your heart fail you on Rhenish wine and venison.”

“Dear Louis,” said Albert, rousing himself into exertion, and somewhat ashamed of his own silence, “I have slept worse, and been astir earlier than you.”

“Be it so,” said his father; “yet I hold it no good

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excuse for your sullen silence. Albert, you have met your sister and me, so long separated from you, so anxious on your behalf, almost like mere strangers, and yet you are returned safe to us, and you find us well."

"Returned indeed—but for safety, my dear father, that word must be a stranger to us Worcester folk for some time. However, it is not my own safety about which I am anxious."

"About whose, then, should you be anxious?—All accounts agree that the King is safe out of the dogs' jaws."

"Not without some danger, though," muttered Louis, thinking of his encounter with Bevis on the preceding evening.

"No, not without danger, indeed," echoed the knight ; but as old Will says, —

There's such divinity doth hedge a king,  
That treason dares not peep at what it would.

No, no—thank God, that's cared for ; our Hope and Fortune is escaped, so all news affirm, escaped from Bristol—if I thought otherwise, Albert, I should be as sad as you are. For the rest of it, I have lurked a month in this house when discovery would have been death, and that is no longer since than after Lord Holland and the Duke of Buckingham's rising at Kingston ; and hang me, if I thought once of twisting my brow into such a tragic fold as yours, but cocked my hat at misfortune as a cavalier should."

"If I might put in a word," said Louis, "it would be to assure Colonel Albert Lee that I verily believe the King would think his own hap, wherever he may be, much the worse that his best subjects were seized with dejection on his account."

"You answer boldly on the King's part, young man," said Sir Henry.

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„my father was meikle about the King's hand,"  
ed Louis, recollecting his present character.

„wonder, then," said Sir Henry, "that you have  
recovered your good spirits and good breeding,  
you heard of his Majesty's escape. Why, you are  
more like the lad we saw last night, than the best  
ster I ever had was like a dray-horse."

"Oh, there is much in rest, and food, and grooming,"  
answered Louis. "You would hardly know the tired  
jade you dismounted from last night, when she is brought  
out prancing and neighing the next morning, rested,  
refreshed, and ready to start again—especially if the  
brute hath some good blood, for such pick up unco  
fast."

"Well, then, but since thy father was a courtier, and  
thou hast learned, I think, something of the trade, tell  
us a little, Master Kerneguy, about him we love most to  
hear about—the King; we are all safe and secret, you  
need not be afraid. He was a hopeful youth; I trust his  
flourishing blossom now gives promise of fruit?"

As the knight spoke, Louis bent his eyes on the ground,  
and seemed at first uncertain what to answer. But,  
admirable at extricating himself from such dilemmas, he  
replied, "that he really could not presume to speak on  
such a subject in the presence of his patron, Colonel  
Albert Lee, who must be a much better judge of the  
character of King Charles than he could pretend  
to be."

Albert was accordingly next assailed by the knight,  
seconded by Alice, for some account of his Majesty's  
character.

"I will speak but according to facts," said Albert;  
"and then I must be acquitted of partiality. If the  
*King had not possessed enterprise and military skill, he  
never would have attempted the expedition to Wor-  
cester;—had he not had personal courage, he had not*



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so long disputed the battle that Cromwell almost judged it lost. That he possesses prudence and patience, must be argued from the circumstances attending his flight ; and that he has the love of his subjects is evident, since, necessarily known to many, he has been betrayed by none."

"For shame, Albert!" replied his sister; "is that the way a good cavalier doles out the character of his Prince, applying an instance at every concession, like a pedlar measuring linen with his rod?—Out upon you!—no wonder you were beaten, if you fought as coldly for your King as you now talk for him."

"I did my best to trace a likeness from what I have seen and known of the original, sister Alice," replied her brother.—"If you would have a fancy portrait, you must get an artist of more imagination than I have to draw it for you."

"I will be that artist myself," said Alice, "and, in *my* portrait, our Monarch shall show all that he ought to be, having such high pretensions—all that he must be, being so loftily descended—all that I am sure he is, and that every loyal heart in the kingdom ought to believe him."

"Well said, Alice," quoth the old knight—"Look thou upon this picture, and on this!—Here is our young friend shall judge. I wager my best nag—that is, I would wager him had I one left—that Alice proves the better painter of the two.—My son's brain is still misty, I think, since his defeat—he has not got the smoke of Worcester out of it. Plague on thee!—a young man, and cast down for one beating! Had you been banged twenty times like me, it had been time to look grave.—

*But come, Alice, forward; the colours are mixed on your pallet—forward with something that shall show like one of Vandyck's living portraits, placed beside the dull presentation there of our ancestor Victor Lee."*

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must be observed, had been educated by her the notions of high and even exaggerated which characterised the cavaliers, and she was an enthusiast in the royal cause. But, besides, as in good spirits at her brother's happy return, wished to prolong the gay humour in which her father had of late scarcely ever indulged.

Well, then," she said, "though I am no Apelles, I will try to paint an Alexander, such as I hope, and am determined to believe, exists in the person of our exiled sovereign, soon I trust to be restored. And I will not go farther than his own family. He shall have all the valiant courage, all the warlike skill, of Henry of France, his grandfather, in order to place him on the throne; all his benevolence, love of his people, patience even of unpleasing advice, sacrifice of his own wishes and pleasures to the commonweal, that, seated there, he may be blest while living, and so long remembered when dead, that for ages after it shall be thought sacrilege to breathe an aspersion against the throne which he has occupied! Long after he is dead, while there remains an old man who has seen him, were the condition of that survivor no higher than a groom or a menial, his grave shall be provided for at the public charge, and his grey hairs regarded with more distinction than an earl's coronet, because he remembers the Second Charles, the monarch of every heart in England!"

While Alice spoke, she was hardly conscious of the presence of any one save her father and brother; for the page withdrew himself somewhat from the circle, and there was nothing to remind her of him. She gave the reins, therefore, to her enthusiasm; and as the tears glittered in her eye, and her beautiful features became animated, she seemed like a descended cherub proclaiming the virtues of a patriot monarch. The person chiefly interested in her description held himself back, as we

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have said, and concealed his own features, yet so as to preserve a full view of the beautiful speaker.

Albert Lee, conscious in whose presence this eulogium was pronounced, was much embarrassed ; but his father, all whose feelings were flattered by the panegyric, was in rapture.

" So much for the *King*, Alice," he said ; " and now for the *Man*."

" For the man," replied Alice, in the same tone, " need I wish him more than the paternal virtues of his unhappy father, of whom his worst enemies have recorded, that if moral virtues and religious faith were to be selected as the qualities which merited a crown, no man could plead the possession of them in a higher or more indisputable degree. Temperate, wise, and frugal, yet munificent in rewarding merit—a friend to letters and the muses, but a severe discourager of the misuse of such gifts—a worthy gentleman—a kind master—the best friend, the best father, the best Christian "——Her voice began to falter, and her father's handkerchief was already at his eyes.

" He was, girl, he was !" exclaimed Sir Henry ; " but no more on't, I charge ye—no more on't—enough ; let his son but possess his virtues, with better advisers, and better fortunes, and he will be all that England, in her warmest wishes, could desire."

There was a pause after this ; for Alice felt as if she had spoken too frankly and too zealously for her sex and youth. Sir Henry was occupied in melancholy recollections on the fate of his late sovereign, while Kerneguy and his supposed patron felt embarrassed, perhaps from a consciousness that the real Charles fell far short of his *ideal character*, as designed in such glowing colours. In some cases, exaggerated or inappropriate praise becomes the most severe satire.

But such reflections were not of a nature to be long

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cherished by the person to whom they might be of great advantage. He assumed a tone of which is, perhaps, the readiest mode of escaping the feelings of self-reproof. "Every cavalier," he should bend his knee to thank Mistress Alice Lee having made such a flattering portrait of the King's master, by laying under contribution for his benefit the virtues of all his ancestors ; only there was one point which would not have expected a female painter to have passed over in silence. When she made him, in right of his grandfather and father, a muster of royal and individual excellences, why could she not have endowed him at the same time with his mother's personal charms? Why should not the son of Henrietta Maria, the finest woman of her day, add the recommendations of a handsome face and figure to his internal qualities? He had the same hereditary title to good looks as to mental qualifications ; and the picture, with such an addition, would be perfect in its way—and God send it might be a resemblance !"

"I understand you, Master Kerneguy," said Alice ; "but I am no fairy, to bestow, as those do in the nursery tales, gifts which Providence has denied. I am a woman enough to have made inquiries on the subject, and I know the general report is, that the King, to have been the son of such handsome parents, is unusually hard-favoured."

"Good God, sister !" said Albert, starting impatiently from his seat.

"Why, you yourself told me so," said Alice, surprised at the emotion he testified ; "and you said"—

"This is intolerable," muttered Albert ; "I must out to speak with Joceline without delay—Louis" (with an imploring look to Kerneguy), "you will surely come with me?"

"I would with all my heart," said Kerneguy, smiling maliciously ; "but you see how I suffer still from lame-



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and how the same good fairy that conferred moral graces, could not also remove corporeal blemishes.

"A mistake, sir," said Alice. "I confer nothing. But attempt to paint our King such as I *hope* he is, such as I am sure he *may* be, should he himself desire so. The same general report which speaks of his tenacity as unprepossessing, describes his talents as of the first order. He has, therefore, the means of arriving at excellence, should he cultivate them sedulously and employ them usefully—should he rule his passions and be guided by his understanding. Every good man cannot be wise; but it is in the power of every wise man, if he pleases, to be as eminent for virtue as for talent."

Young Kerneguy rose briskly, and took a turn through the room; and ere the knight could make any observation on the singular vivacity in which he had indulged, he threw himself again into his chair, and said, in rather an altered tone of voice—"It seems, then, Mistress Alice Lee, that the good friends who have described this poor King to you, have been as unfavourable in their account of his morals as of his person?"

"The truth must be better known to you, sir," said Alice, "than it can be to me. Some rumours there have been which accuse him of a license, which, whatever allowance flatterers make for it, does not, to say the least, become the son of the Martyr—I shall be happy to have these contradicted on good authority."

"I am surprised at your folly," said Sir Henry Lee, "in hinting at such things, Alice; a pack of scandal, invented by the rascals who have usurped the government—a thing devised by the enemy."

"Nay, sir," said Kerneguy, laughing, "we must not let our zeal charge the enemy with more scandal than they actually deserve. Mistress Alice has put the question to me. I can only answer, that no one can be more

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devotedly attached to the King than I myself,—that I am very partial to his merits and blind to his defects ; and that, in short, I would be the last man in the world to give up his cause where it was tenable. Nevertheless, I must confess, that if all his grandfather of Navarre's morals have not descended to him, this poor King has somehow inherited a share of the specks that were thought to dim the lustre of that great Prince—that Charles is a little soft-hearted, or so, where beauty is concerned.—Do not blame him too severely, pretty Mistress Alice, when a man's hard fate has driven him among thorns, it were surely hard to prevent him from trifling with the few roses he may find among them ?”

Alice, who probably thought the conversation had gone far enough, rose while Master Kerneguy was speaking and was leaving the room before he had finished, without apparently hearing the interrogation with which he concluded. Her father approved of her departure, not thinking the turn which Kerneguy had given to the discourse altogether fit for her presence ; and, desiring her civilly to break off the conversation, “I see,” he said, “this is about the time, when, as Will says, the household affairs will call my daughter hence ; I will therefore challenge you, young gentleman, to stretch your limbs in a little exercise with me, either at single rapier, or rapier and poniard, back-sword, spadroon, or your national weapons of broadsword and target ; for all or any of which I think we shall find implements in the hall.”

It would be too high a distinction, Master Kerneguy said, for a poor page to be permitted to try a passage of arms with a knight so renowned as Sir Henry Lee, and he hoped to enjoy so great an honour before he left *Woodstock* ; but at the present moment his lameness *continued to give him so much pain, that he should shame himself in the attempt.*

*Sir Henry then offered to read him a play of Sh*

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For this purpose turned up King Richard II.  
/ had he commenced with

Old John of Gaunt, time honoured Lancaster,

ne young gentleman was seized with such an insupportable fit of the cramp as could only be relieved by immediate exercise. He therefore begged permission to be allowed to saunter abroad for a little while, if Sir Henry Lee considered he might venture without danger.

"I can answer for the two or three of our people that are still left about the place," said Sir Henry; "and I know my son has disposed them so as to be constantly on the watch. If you hear the bell toll at the Lodge, I advise you to come straight home by the way of the King's Oak, which you see in yonder glade towering above the rest of the trees. We will have some one stationed there to introduce you secretly into the house."

The page listened to these cautions with the impatience of a school-boy, who, desirous of enjoying his holiday, hears without marking the advice of tutor or parent, about taking care not to catch cold, and so forth.

The absence of Alice Lee had removed all which had rendered the interior of the Lodge agreeable, and the mercurial young page fled with precipitation from the exercise and amusement which Sir Henry had proposed. He girded on his rapier, and threw his cloak, or rather that which belonged to his borrowed suit, about him, bringing up the lower part so as to muffle the face and show only the eyes over it, which was a common way of wearing them in those days, both in streets, in the country, and in public places, when men had a mind to be private, and to avoid interruption from salutations and greetings in the market-place. He hurried across the open space which divided the front of the Lodge from the wood, with the haste of a bird escaped from the cage, which, though joyful at its liberation, is at the same time



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sensible of its need of protection and shelter. The wood seemed to afford these to the human fugitive, as it might have done to the bird in question.

When under the shadow of the branches, and within the verge of the forest, covered from observation, yet with the power of surveying the front of the Lodge, and all the open ground before it, the supposed Louis Kerneguy meditated on his escape.

“What an infliction—to fence with a gouty old man, who knows not, I dare say, a trick of the sword which was not familiar in the days of old Vincent Saviolo ! or, as a change of misery, to hear him read one of those wildernesses of scenes which the English call a play, from prologue to epilogue—from Enter the first to the final *Exeunt omnes*—an unparalleled horror—a penance which would have made a dungeon darker, and added dulness even to Woodstock !”

Here he stopped and looked around, then continued his meditations—“So then, it was here that the gay old Norman secluded his pretty mistress—I warrant, without having seen her, that Rosamond Clifford was never half so handsome as that lovely Alice Lee. And what a soul there is in the girl’s eye !—with what abandonment of all respects, save that expressing the interest of the moment, she poured forth her tide of enthusiasm ! Were I to be long here, in spite of prudence, and half-a-dozen very venerable obstacles beside, I should be tempted to try to reconcile her to the indifferent visage of this same hard-favoured Prince.—Hard-favoured ?—it is a kind of treason for one who pretends to so much loyalty, to say so of the King’s features, and in my mind deserves punishment.—

Ah, pretty Mistress Alice ! many a Mistress Alice before you has made dreadful exclamations on the irregularities of mankind, and the wickedness of the age, and ended by being glad to look out for apologies for their own share of them. But then her father—the stout old cavalier—

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I friend—should such a thing befall, it  
s heart.—Break a pudding's end—he has  
f I give his grandson a title to quarter the  
id, what matter if a bar sinister is drawn  
-Pshaw! far from an abatement, it is a  
n—the heralds in their next visitation will  
r in the roll for it. Then, if he did wince  
does not the old traitor deserve it ;—first,  
intention of punching mine anointed body  
e with his vile foils—and secondly, his  
lot with Will Shakspeare, a fellow as much  
himself, to read me to death with five acts  
play, or chronicle, ' being the piteous Life  
Richard the Second ? ' Oddsfish, my own  
enough, as I think ; and my death may  
ght I see coming yet. Ah, but then the  
end—my guide—my guard—So far as this  
intrigue concerns him, such practising  
ght not quite fair. But your bouncing,  
vengeful brothers exist only on the theatre.  
ige, with which a brother persecuted a poor  
seduced his sister, or been seduced by her,  
ght be, as relentlessly as if he had trodden  
hout making an apology, is entirely out of  
Dorset killed the Lord Bruce many a long  
shaw ! when a King is the offender, the  
crifices nothing by pocketing a little wrong  
ot personally resent ; and in France there  
house where each individual would not  
inch higher, if they could boast of such a  
ance with the Grand Monarque."

he thoughts which rushed through the  
s, at his first quitting the Lodge of Wood-  
ging into the forest that surrounded it.  
ogic, however, was not the result of his  
ion, nor received without scruple by his

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sound understanding. It was a train of reasoning which he had been led to adopt from his too close intimacy with the witty and profligate youth of quality by whom he had been surrounded. It arose from the evil communication with Villiers, Wilmot, Sedley, and others, whose genius was destined to corrupt that age, and the Monarch on whom its character afterwards came so much to depend. Such men, bred amidst the license of civil war, and without experiencing that curb which in ordinary times the authority of parents and relations imposes upon the headlong passions of youth, were practised in every species of vice, and could recommend it as well by precept as by example, turning into pitiless ridicule all those nobler feelings which withhold men from gratifying lawless passion. The events of the King's life had also favoured his reception of this Epicurean doctrine. He saw himself, with the highest claims to sympathy and assistance, regarded by the Courts which he visited, rather as a permitted suppliant, than an exiled Monarch. He beheld his own rights and claims treated with scorn and indifference ; and in the same proportion, he was reconciled to the hard-hearted and selfish course of dissipation, which promised him immediate indulgence. If this was obtained at the expense of the happiness of others, should he of all men be scrupulous upon the subject, since he treated others only as the world treated him ?

But although the foundations of this unhappy system had been laid, the Prince was not at this early period so fully devoted to it as he was found to have become, when a door was unexpectedly opened for his restoration. On the contrary, though the train of gay reasoning which *we have above stated*, as if it had found vent in uttered language, did certainly arise in his mind, as that which *would have been suggested* by his favourite councillors on such occasions, he recollected that what might be

is a peccadillo in France or the Netherlands, to a diverting novel or pasquinade by the own wandering Court, was likely to have the horrid ingratitude, and infamous treachery of the English gentry, and would inflict a deep, an incurable wound upon his interest, among the aged and respectable part of his adherents. It occurred to him—for his own interest did not leave him, even in this mode of considering the subject—that he was in the power of the Lees, father and son, who were always understood to be at least sufficiently malicious on the score of honour; and if they should suspect such an affront, as his imagination had conceived, they could be at no loss to find means of the most ample revenge, either by their own hands, or by those of the ruling faction.

“The risk of re-opening the fatal window at Whitehall, and renewing the tragedy of the Man in the Mask, were a worse penalty,” was his final reflection, “than the old stool of the Scottish penance; and lovely though Alice Lee is, I cannot afford to intrigue at such a hazard. So farewell, pretty maiden! unless, as sometimes has happened, thou hast a humour to throw thyself at thy King’s feet, and then I am too magnanimous to refuse thee my protection. Yet, when I think of the pale clay-cold figure of the old man, as he lay last night extended before me, and imagine the fury of Albert Lee raging with impatience, his hand on a sword which only his loyalty prevents him from plunging into his sovereign’s heart—nay, the picture is too horrible! Charles must forever change his name to Joseph, even if he were strongly tempted; which may Fortune in mercy prohibit!”

To speak the truth of a prince, more unfortunate in his early companions, and the callousness which he acquired by his juvenile adventures and irregular mode of life, than in his natural disposition, Charles came the

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more readily to this wise conclusion, because he was by no means subject to those violent and engrossing passions, to gratify which the world has been thought well lost. His amours, like many of the present day, were rather matters of habit and fashion, than of passion and affection ; and, in comparing himself in this respect to his grandfather, Henry IV., he did neither his ancestor nor himself perfect justice. He was, to parody the words of a bard, himself actuated by the stormy passions which an intriguer often only simulates,—

None of those who loved so kindly,  
None of those who loved so blindly.

An amour was with him a matter of amusement, a regular consequence, as it seemed to him, of the ordinary course of things in society. He was not at the trouble to practise seductive arts, because he had seldom found occasion to make use of them ; his high rank, and the profligacy of that part of female society with which he had mingled, rendering them unnecessary. Added to this, he had, for the same reason, seldom been crossed by the obstinate interference of relations, or even of husbands, who had generally seemed not unwilling to suffer such matters to take their course.

So that, notwithstanding his total looseness of principle, and systematic disbelief in the virtue of women, and the honour of men, as connected with the character of their female relatives, Charles was not a person to have studiously introduced disgrace into a family, where a conquest might have been violently disputed, attained with difficulty, and accompanied with general distress, not to mention the excitation of all fiercer passions against the author of the scandal.

*But the danger of the King's society consisted in his being much of an unbeliever in the existence of such cases as were likely to be embittered by remorse on the*

higher reward for their compliance.

While we are discussing the character of his disposition to gallantry, the Wanderer was conducted, by the walk he had chosen, through several whimsical turns, until at last it brought him under the windows of Victor Lee's apartment, where he descried Alice watering and arranging some flowers placed on the oriel window, which was easily accessible by daylight, although at night he had found it a dangerous attempt to scale it. But not Alice only, her father also showed himself near the window, and beckoned him up. The family party seemed now more promising than before, and the fugitive Prince was weary of playing battledore and shuttlecock with his conscience, and much disposed to let matters go as chance should determine.

He climbed lightly up the broken ascent, and was readily welcomed by the old knight, who held activity in high honour. Alice also seemed glad to see the lively and interesting young man ; and by her presence, and the unaffected mirth with which she enjoyed his sallies, he was animated to display those qualities of wit and humour, which nobody possessed in a higher degree.

His satire delighted the old gentleman, who laughed till his eyes ran over as he heard the youth, whose claims to his respect he little dreamed of, amusing him with successive imitations of the Scottish Presbyterian.

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unbounded confidence. The interior pressless hiding-places, and secret modes of no one but the ancient residents of the far better to Rochecliffe than to any of a Rector at the neighbouring town, his position as an antiquary had induced him to carry out researches among the old ruins—the house he was believed, in some instances, to have found himself.

These conveniences, it was no doubt true, the Parliamentary Commissioners were still at no time and would be ready to resume their duties at the first opportunity. But no one supposed that such an opportunity was likely to occur; and all the influence of Cromwell and the army grew so predominant, that the disappointed Commissioners could attempt nothing in contradiction to his wish to wait with patience an indemnification in full quarter for their vacated commissions. With the voice of Master Joseph Tomkins, they had determined, in the first place, to comply, and were making preparations accordingly, and promised still farther to insure the security

It was therefore settled that the King, the Master of Louis Kerneguy, should remain in the Lodge, until a vessel should be procured at the port which might be esteemed the most convenient.



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## CHAP. XXIV.

The deadliest snakes  
sings.

these which, twined 'mongst  
varied blossoms,  
spangled dew-drop;  
harmless,  
no danger.

On  
Chari  
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(1802)

that Charles had  
Woodstock at  
the house

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ice paid to a few old-fashioned opinions, at which s laughed in his sleeve—were all sufficient to gain disguised Prince an interest in Sir Henry Lee, conciliate in an equal degree the good-will of his daughter.

ver were there two young persons who could be said commence this species of intimacy with such unequal advantages. Charles was a libertine who, if he did not cold blood resolve upon prosecuting his passion for Alice to a dishonourable conclusion, was at every moment liable to be provoked to attempt the strength of a virtue, in which he was no believer. Then Alice, on her part, hardly knew even what was implied by the word libertine or seducer. Her mother had died early in the commencement of the Civil War, and she had been bred up chiefly with her brother and cousin ; so that she had an unfearing and unsuspecting frankness of manner, upon which Charles was not unwilling or unlikely to put a construction favourable to his own views. Even Alice's love for her cousin—the first sensation which awakens the most innocent and simple mind to feelings of shyness and restraint towards the male sex in general—had failed to excite such an alarm in *her* bosom. They were nearly related ; and Everard, though young, was several years her elder, and had, from her infancy, been an object of her respect as well as of her affection. When this early and childish intimacy ripened into youthful love, confessed and returned, still it differed in some shades from the passion existing between lovers originally strangers to each other, until their affections have been united in the ordinary course of courtship. Their love was fonder, more familiar, more perfectly confidential ; purer, too, perhaps, and more free from starts of *passionate violence*, or apprehensive jealousy.

The possibility that any one could have attempted to rival Everard in her affection, was a circumstance whi

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never occurred to Alice ; and that this singular Scottish lad, whom she laughed with on account of his humour, and laughed at for his peculiarities, should be an object of danger or of caution, never once entered her imagination. The sort of intimacy to which she admitted Kerneguy was the same to which she would have received a companion of her own sex, whose manners she did not always approve, but whose society she found always amusing.

It was natural that the freedom of Alice Lec's conduct, which arose from the most perfect indifference, should pass for something approaching to encouragement in the royal gallant's apprehension, and that any resolutions he had formed against being tempted to violate the hospitality of Woodstock, should begin to totter, as opportunities for doing so became more frequent.

These opportunities were favoured by Albert's departure from Woodstock the very day after his arrival. It had been agreed, in full council with Charles and Rochecliffe, that he should go to visit his uncle Everard in the county of Kent, and, by showing himself there, obviate any cause of suspicion which might arise from his residence at Woodstock, and remove any pretext for disturbing his father's family on account of their harbouring one who had been so lately in arms. He had also undertaken, at his own great personal risk, to visit different points on the sea-coast, and ascertain the security of different places for providing shipping for the King's leaving England.

These circumstances were alike calculated to procure the King's safety, and facilitate his escape. But Alice was thereby deprived of the presence of her brother, who would have been her most watchful guardian, but who had set down the King's light talk upon a former occasion *→ the gaiety of his humour, and would have thought he had done his sovereign great injustice, had he seriously*

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him of such a breach of hospitality as a dis-  
ole pursuit of Alice would have implied.

e were, however, two of the household at Wood-  
who appeared not so entirely reconciled with  
Kerneguy or his purposes. The one was Bevis,  
seemed, from their first unfriendly rencontre, to  
e kept up a pique against their new guest, which no  
ances on the part of Charles were able to soften. If  
page was by chance left alone with his young mistress,  
is chose always to be of the party; came close by  
Alice's chair, and growled audibly when the gallant drew  
near her. "It is a pity," said the disguised Prince,  
"that your Bevis is not a bull-dog, that we might dub  
him a roundhead at once—He is too handsome, too  
noble, too aristocratic, to nourish those inhospitable pre-  
judices against a poor houseless cavalier. I am convinced  
the spirit of Pym or Hampden has transmigrated into the  
rogue, and continues to demonstrate his hatred against  
royalty and all its adherents."

Alice would then reply, that Bevis was loyal in word  
and deed, and only partook her father's prejudices against  
the Soots, which, she could not but acknowledge, were  
tolerably strong.

"Nay, then," said the supposed Louis, "I must find  
some other reason, for I cannot allow Sir Bevis's resent-  
ment to rest upon national antipathy. So we will suppose  
that some gallant cavalier, who wended to the wars and  
never returned, has adopted this shape to look back upon  
the haunts he left so unwillingly, and is jealous at seeing  
even poor Louis Kerneguy drawing near to the lady of  
his lost affections."—He approached her chair as he  
spoke, and Bevis gave one of his deep growls.

"In that case you had best keep your distance," said  
Alice, laughing, "for the bite of a dog, possessed by the  
ghost of a jealous lover cannot be very safe." And  
King carried on the dialogue in the same strain—wt

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while it led Alice to apprehend nothing more serious than the apish gallantry of a fantastic boy, certainly induced the supposed Louis Kerneguy to think that he had made one of those conquests which often and easily fall to the share of sovereigns. Notwithstanding the acuteness of his apprehension, he was not sufficiently aware that the Royal Road to female favour is only open to monarchs when they travel in grand costume, and that when they woo incognito, their path of courtship is liable to the same windings and obstacles which obstruct the course of private individuals.

There was, besides Bevis, another member of the family, who kept a look-out upon Louis Kerneguy, and with no friendly eye. Phoebe Mayflower, though her experience extended not beyond the sphere of the village, yet knew the world much better than her mistress, and besides she was five years older. More knowing, she was more suspicious. She thought that odd-looking Scotch boy made more up to her young mistress than was proper for his condition of life ; and, moreover, that Alice gave him a little more encouragement than Parthenia would have afforded to any such Jack-a-dandy, in the absence of Argalus—for the volume treating of the loves of these celebrated Arcadians was then the favourite study of swains and damsels throughout merry England. Entertaining such suspicions, Phoebe was at a loss how to conduct herself on the occasion, and yet resolved she would not see the slightest chance of the course of Colonel Everard's true love being obstructed, without attempting a remedy. She had a peculiar favour for Markham herself ; and, moreover, he was, according to her phrase, as handsome and personable a young man as was in Oxfordshire ; and this Scottish scarecrow was no more to be compared to him than chalk was to cheese. And yet she allowed that Master Girnigy had a wonderfully well-oiled tongue, and that such gallants were not to be despised.

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s to be done?—she had no facts to offer, only suspicion ; and was afraid to speak to her mistress, kindness, great as it was, did not, nevertheless, age familiarity.

sounded Joceline ; but he was, she knew not why, deeply interested about this unlucky lad, and held his importance so high, that she could make no impression on him. To speak to the old knight, would have been to raise a general tempest. The worthy chaplain, who was, at Woodstock, grand referee on all disputed matters, would have been the damsel's most natural resource, for he was peaceful as well as moral by profession, and politic by practice. But it happened he had given Phoebe unintentional offence by speaking of her under the classical epithet of *Rustica Fidele*, the which epithet, as she understood it not, she held herself bound to resent as contumelious, and, declaring she was not fonder of a *fiddle* than other folk, had ever since shunned all intercourse with Dr. Rochecliffe which she could easily avoid.

Master Tomkins was always coming and going about the house under various pretexts ; but he was a round-head, and she was too true to the cavaliers to introduce any of the enemy as parties to their internal discords ; besides, he had talked to Phoebe herself in a manner which induced her to decline everything in the shape of familiarity with him. Lastly, Cavaliero Wildrake might have been consulted ; but Phoebe had her own reasons for saying, as she did with some emphasis, that Cavaliero Wildrake was an impudent London rake. At length she resolved to communicate her suspicions to the party having most interest in verifying or confuting them.

“ I'll let Master Markham Everard know that there is a wasp buzzing about his honey-comb,” said Phoebe ; “ and, moreover, that I know that this young Scotch *Scapegrace* shifted himself out of a woman's into a man's dress at Goody Green's, and gave Goody Green's Dolly a

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gold piece to say nothing about it ; and no more she did to any one but me, and she knows best herself whether she gave change for the gold or not—but Master Louis is a saucy jackanapes, and like enough to ask it."

Three or four days elapsed while matters continued in this condition—the disguised Prince sometimes thinking on the intrigue which Fortune seemed to have thrown in his way for his amusement, and taking advantage of such opportunities as occurred to increase his intimacy with Alice Lee ; but much oftener harassing Dr. Rochcliffe with questions about the possibility of escape, which the good man finding himself unable to answer, secured his leisure against royal importunity, by retreating into the various unexplored recesses of the Lodge, known perhaps only to himself, who had been for nearly a score of years employed in writing the Wonders of Woodstock.

It chanced on the fourth day, that some trifling circumstance had called the knight abroad ; and he had left the young Scotsman, now familiar in the family, along with Alice, in the parlour of Victor Lee. Thus situated, he thought the time not unpropitious for entering upon a strain of gallantry, of a kind which might be called experimental, such as is practised by the Croats in skirmishing, when they keep bridle in hand, ready to attack the enemy, or canter off without coming to close quarters, as circumstances may recommend. After using for nearly ten minutes a sort of metaphysical jargon, which might, according to Alice's pleasure, have been interpreted either into gallantry, or the language of serious pretension, and when he supposed her engaged in fathoming his meaning, he had the mortification to find, by a single and brief question, that he had been totally unattended to, and that Alice was thinking on anything at the moment rather than the sense of what he had been saying. She asked him if he could tell what it was o'clock, and

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an air of real curiosity concerning the lapse of which put coquetry wholly out of the question.

"All go look at the sun-dial, Mistress Alice," said the gallant, rising and colouring, through a sense of the contempt with which he thought himself treated.

"You will do me a pleasure, Master Kerneguy," said the lady, without the least consciousness of the indignation which he had excited.

Master Louis Kerneguy left the room accordingly, but he did not, however, to procure the information required, but to vent his anger and mortification, and to swear, with more serious purpose than he had dared to do before, that Alice should rue her insolence. Good-natured as he was, he was still a prince, unaccustomed to contradiction, far less to contempt, and his self-pride felt, for the moment, wounded to the quick. With a hasty step he plunged into the Chase, only remembering his own safety so far as to choose the deep and sequestered avenues, where, walking on with the speedy and active step which his recovery from fatigue now permitted him to exercise according to his wont, he solaced his angry purposes, by devising schemes of revenge on the insolent country coquette, from which no consideration of hospitality was in future to have weight enough to save her.

The irritated gallant passed

The dial-stone, aged and green,

without deigning to ask it a single question ; nor could it have satisfied his curiosity if he had, for no sun happened to shine at the moment. He then hastened forward, muffling himself in his cloak, and assuming a stooping and slouching gait, which diminished his apparent height. He was soon involved in the deep and *dim alleys* of the wood into which he had insensibly *plunged himself*, and was traversing it at a great rate, without having any distinct idea in what direction he



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was going, when suddenly his course was arrested, first by a loud hollo, and then by a summons to stand, accompanied by what seemed still more startling and extraordinary, the touch of a cane upon his shoulder, imposed in a good-humoured but somewhat imperious manner.

There were few symptoms of recognition which would have been welcome at this moment ; but the appearance of the person who had thus arrested his course, was least of all that he could have anticipated as timely or agreeable. When he turned, on receiving the signal, he beheld himself close to a young man, nearly six feet in height, well made in joint and limb, but the gravity of whose apparel, although handsome and gentleman-like, and a sort of precision in his habit, from the cleanliness and stiffness of his band to the unsullied purity of his Spanish-leather shoes, bespoke a love of order which was foreign to the impoverished and vanquished cavaliers, and proper to the habits of those of the victorious party, who could afford to dress themselves handsomely ; and whose rule—that is, such as regarded the higher and more respectable classes—enjoined decency and sobriety of garb and deportment. There was yet another weight against the Prince in the scale, and one still more characteristic of the inequality in the comparison, under which he seemed to labour. There was strength in the muscular form of the stranger who had brought him to this involuntary parley, authority and determination in his brow, a long rapier on the left, and a poniard or dagger on the right side of his belt, and a pair of pistols stuck into it, which would have been sufficient to give the unknown the advantage (*Louis Kerneguy having no weapon but his sword*), even had his personal strength approached nearer than it did to that of the person by whom he was thus suddenly stopped.

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My regretting the thoughtless fit of passion that brought me into his present situation, but especially the want of the pistols he had left behind, and which would have done much to place bodily strength and weakness upon an equal footing, Charles yet availed himself of the age and presence of mind, in which few of his uncles' family had for centuries been deficient. He stood firm and without motion, his cloak still wrapped round the lower part of his face, to give time for examination, in case he was mistaken for some other person. His coolness produced its effect ; for the other party, with doubt and surprise on his part, "Joceline Joliffe, is it not?—if I know not Joceline Joliffe, I should at least know my own cloak."

"I am not Joceline Joliffe, as you may see, sir," said the neguy, calmly, drawing himself erect to show the difference of size, and dropping the cloak from his face.

"Indeed !" replied the stranger in surprise ; "then, Unknown, I have to express my regret at having drawn my cane in intimating that I wished you to stop. In that dress, which I certainly recognise for my own, I concluded you must be Joceline, in whose custody I had left my habit at the Lodge."

"If it had been Joceline, sir," replied the supposed neguy, with perfect composure, "methinks you would not have struck so hard."

The other party was obviously confused by the steadiness with which he was encountered. The sense of politeness dictated, in the first place, an apology for the mistake, when he thought he had been tolerably certain of the person. Master Kerneguy was not in a humour to be punctilious ; he bowed gravely, as indicating his acceptance of the excuse offered, then turned round, and walked, as he conceived, towards the castle ; though he had traversed the woods, which were

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cut with various alleys in different directions, too hastily to be certain of the real course which he wished to pursue.

He was much embarrassed to find that this did not get him to his friend's person,

ed

aptly, and he began to outstrip his surveillance for more than three or four yards. The Wanderer mended his pace; but, although he was then, in his youth, as afterwards, of the best walkers in Britain, the race to a run, kept fully up to his riper age, he began to think that, as a single-handed runner, he was likely to find friends in the forest, than in the open, where the man and the deer were concurrents.

Between anxiety, therefore, vexation, and any other feeling, Charles faced suddenly round on his pursuer, as he reached a small narrow glade, which led to the meadow over which presided the King's Oak, the tree and its scathed branches and gigantic trunk of which formed a vista to the little wild avenue.

"Sir," said he to his pursuer, "you have already been guilty of one piece of impertinence towards me, and I have apologised; and knowing no reason why I should distinguish me as an object of incivility, I have accepted your excuse without scruple. Is there anything remains to be settled between us, which

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me in this manner? If so, I shall be glad to a subject of explanation or satisfaction, as they admit of. I think you can owe me no malice; never saw you before to my knowledge. If you have any good reason for asking it, I am willing to give you personal satisfaction. If your purpose is only impertinent curiosity, I let you know that I will not suffer myself to be dogged in my private walks by any one."

"When I recognise my own cloak on another man's shoulders," replied the stranger, dryly, "methinks I have a natural right to follow and see what becomes of it; for know, sir, though I have been mistaken as to the wearer, yet I am confident I had as good a right to stretch my cane across the cloak you are muffled in, as ever had any one to brush his own garments. If, therefore, we are to be friends, I must ask, for instance, how you came by that cloak, and where you are going with it? I shall otherwise make bold to stop you, as one who has sufficient commission to do so."

"Oh, unhappy cloak," thought the Wanderer, "ay, and thrice unhappy the idle fancy that sent me here with it wrapped around my nose, to pick quarrels and attract observation, when quiet and secrecy were peculiarly essential to my safety!"

"If you will allow me to guess, sir," continued the stranger, who was no other than Markham Everard, "I will convince you that you are better known than you think for."

"Now, Heaven forbid!" prayed the party addressed, in silence, but with as much devotion as ever he applied to a prayer in his life. Yet even in this moment of extreme urgency his courage and composure did not fail; and he recollected it was of the utmost importance not to seem startled, and to answer so as, if possible, to lead the dangerous companion with whom he had met, to

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onfess the extent of his actual knowledge or suspicion concerning him.

"If you know me, sir," he said, "and are a gentleman, as your appearance promises, you cannot be at a loss to discover to what accident you must attribute my wearing these clothes, which you say are yours."

"Oh, sir," replied Colonel Everard, his wrath in no sort turned away by the mildness of the stranger's answer—"we have learned our Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and we know for what purposes young men of quality travel in disguise—we know that even female attire is resorted to on certain occasions—We have heard of *Vertumnus* and *Pomona*."

The monarch, as he weighed these words, again uttered a devout prayer, that this ill-looking affair might have no deeper root than the jealousy of some admirer of Alice Lee, promising to himself, that, devotee as he was to the fair sex, he would make no scruple of renouncing the fairest of Eve's daughters in order to get out of the present dilemma.

"Sir," he said, "you seem to be a gentleman. I have no objection to tell you, as such, that I also am of that class."

"Or somewhat higher, perhaps?" said Everard.

"A gentleman," replied Charles, "is a term which comprehends all ranks entitled to armorial bearing: duke, a lord, a prince, is no more than a gentleman, and if in misfortune, as I am, he may be glad if the general term of courtesy is allowed him."

"Sir," replied Everard, "I have no purpose to oblige you to any acknowledgment fatal to your own safety, nor do I hold it my business to be active in the affairs of private individuals, whose perverted sense of duty may have led them into errors, rather to be than punished by candid men. But if those have brought civil war and disturbance into their ne-

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proceed to carry dishonour and disgrace into the  
om of families—if they attempt to carry on their  
vate debaucheries to the injury of the hospitable roofs  
nich afford them refuge from the consequences of their  
iblic crimes, do you think, my lord, that we shall bear  
with patience?"

"If it is your purpose to quarrel with me," said the Prince, "speak it out at once like a gentleman. You have the advantage, no doubt, of arms; but it is not that odds which will induce me to fly from a single man. If, on the other hand, you are disposed to hear reason, I tell you in calm words, that I neither suspect the offence to which you allude, nor comprehend why you give me the title of my Lord."

"You deny, then, being the Lord Wilmot?" said Everard.

"I may do so most safely," said the Prince.

"Perhaps you rather style yourself Earl of Rochester? We heard that the issuing of some such patent by the King of Scots was a step which your ambition proposed.

"Neither lord nor earl am I, as sure as I have a Christian soul to be saved. My name is"—

"Do not degrade yourself by unnecessary falsehood, my lord; and that to a single man, who, I promise you, will not invoke public justice to assist his own good sword, should he see cause to use it. Can you look at that ring, and deny that you are Lord Wilmot?"

He handed to the disguised Prince a ring which he took from his purse, and his opponent instantly knew it for the same he had dropped into Alice's pitcher at the fountain, obeying only, though imprudently, the gal-lantry of the moment, in giving a pretty gem to a hand-some girl, whom he had accidentally frightened.

"I know the ring," he said; "it has been in r  
ossession. How it should prove me to be Lord Wilmot."

K.

y, it bears false witness

answered Everard ; and,  
spring ingeniously con-  
ing, on which the stone  
it the cypher of Lord  
in miniature, with a  
v, sir?"

proofs," said the Prince ;  
hat can be easily accounted  
ottish nobleman, who was  
prisoner at Worcester fight.  
I me fly, he gave me the few  
that among others. I have  
changed rings with Lord  
n in Scotland, but I never  
em which you have shown

ary to say, Charles spoke very  
e parted with it in the way he  
would be easily recognised. He  
s pause :—"Once more, sir—I  
t concerns my safety—if you are  
ne pass, and I may do you on  
d service. If you mean to arrest  
re, and at your own peril, for  
ner your way, nor permit you to  
you let me pass, I will thank you  
eapon."

," said Colonel Everard, "wheth  
gay young nobleman for whom  
made me uncertain ; but, intim  
ly has been with him, I have f  
e proficient in the school of  
Vilmot and Villiers are profe  
laster a graduated student.

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Woodstock, where you have rewarded the  
of the family by meditating the most deadly  
their honour, has proved you too apt a scholar  
academy. I intended only to warn you on this  
—it will be your own fault if I add chastisement  
onion."

"Warn me, sir!" said the Prince, indignantly, "and  
isement! This is presuming more on my patience  
is consistent with your own safety—Draw, sir."—  
saying, he laid his hand on his sword.

"My religion," said Everard, "forbids me to be rash  
in shedding blood—Go home, sir—be wise—consult the  
dictates of honour as well as prudence. Respect the  
honour of the House of Lee, and know there is one  
nearly allied to it, by whom your motions will be called  
to severe account."

"Aha!" said the Prince, with a bitter laugh, "I see the  
whole matter now—we have our roundheaded Colonel,  
our puritan cousin, before us—the man of texts and  
morals, whom Alice Lee laughs at so heartily. If your  
religion, sir, prevents you from giving satisfaction, it  
should prevent you from offering insult to a person of  
honour."

The passions of both were now fully up—they drew  
mutually, and began to fight, the Colonel relinquishing  
the advantage he could have obtained by the use of his  
firearms. A thrust of the arm, or a slip of the foot,  
might, at the moment, have changed the destinies of  
Britain, when the arrival of a third party broke off the  
combat.



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### CHAP. XXV.

*Stay—for the King has thrown his warder down.*

RICHARD II.

**T**HE combatants whom we left engaged at the end of the last chapter, made mutual passes at each other with apparently equal skill and courage. Charles had been too often in action, and too long a party as well as a victim to civil war, to find anything new or surprising in being obliged to defend himself with his own hands; and Everard had been distinguished, as well for his personal bravery, as for the other properties of a commander. But the arrival of a third party prevented the tragic conclusion of a combat, in which the success of either party must have given him much cause for regretting his victory.

It was the old knight himself, who arrived, mounted upon a forest pony, for the war and sequestration had left him no steed of a more dignified description. He thrust himself between the combatants, and commanded them on their lives to hold. So soon as a glance from one to the other had ascertained to him whom he had to deal with, he demanded, "Whether the devils of Woodstock, whom folk talked about, had got possession of them both, that they were tilting at each other within the verge of the royal liberties? Let me tell both of you," he said, "that while old Henry Lee is at Woodstock, the immunities of the Park shall be maintained as much as if the King were still on the throne. None shall fight duellos here, excepting the stags in their season. Put up, both of you, or I shall lug out as *thirdsman*, and prove perhaps the worst devil of the three!—As Will says—

*I'll so maul you and your toasting-irons,  
That you shall think the devil has come from hell."*

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batants desisted from their encounter, but  
ing at each other sullenly, as men do in such  
n, each unwilling to seem to desire peace more  
; other, and averse therefore to be the first to  
his sword.

turn your weapons, gentlemen, upon the spot,"  
he knight yet more peremptorily, "one and both  
ou, or you will have something to do with me, I  
mise you. You may be thankful times are changed.  
ave known them such, that your insolence might have  
ost each of you your right hand, if not redeemed with  
a round sum of money. Nephew, if you do not mean  
to alienate me for ever, I command you to put up.—  
Master Kerneguy, you are my guest. I request of you  
not to do me the insult of remaining with your sword  
drawn where it is my duty to see peace observed."

"I obey you, Sir Henry," said the King, sheathing  
his rapier—"I hardly indeed know wherefore I was  
assaulted by this gentleman. I assure you, none re-  
spects the King's person or privileges more than myself  
—though the devotion is somewhat out of fashion."

"We may find a place to meet, sir," replied Everard,  
"where neither the royal person nor privileges can be  
offended."

"Faith, very hardly, sir," said Charles, unable to  
suppress the rising jest—"I mean, the King has so  
few followers, that the loss of the least of them might  
be some small damage to him; but, risking all that,  
I will meet you wherever there is fair field for a poor  
cavalier to get off in safety, if he has the luck in fight."

Sir Henry Lee's first idea had been fixed upon the in-  
sult offered to the royal demesne; he now began to turn  
his thoughts towards the safety of his kinsman, and of the  
*young royalist*, as he deemed him. "Gentlemen," he  
said, "I must insist on this business being put to a final  
end. Nephew Markham, is this your return for my con-

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descension in coming back to Woodstock on your warrant, that you should take an opportunity to cut the throat of my guest?"

"If you knew his purpose as well as I do,"—said Markham, and then paused, conscious that he might only incense his uncle without convincing him, as anything he might say of Kerneguy's addresses to Alice was likely to be imputed to his own jealous suspicions—he looked on the ground, therefore, and was silent.

"And you, Master Kerneguy," said Sir Henry, "can you give me any reason why you seek to take the life of this young man, in whom, though unhappily forgetful of his loyalty and duty, I must yet take some interest, as my nephew by affinity?"

"I was not aware the gentleman enjoyed that honour, which certainly would have protected him from my sword," answered Kerneguy. "But the quarrel is his; nor can I tell any reason why he fixed it upon me, unless it were the difference of our political opinions."

"You know the contrary," said Everard; "you know that I told you you were safe from me as a fugitive royalist—and your last words showed you were at no loss to guess my connection with Sir Henry. That, indeed, is of little consequence. I should debase myself did I use the relationship as a means of protection from you, or any one."

As they thus disputed, neither choosing to approach the real cause of quarrel, Sir Henry looked from the one to the other, with a peace-making countenance, exclaiming—

"—Why, what an intricate impeach is this?  
*I think you both have drunk of Circe's cup.*

*Come, my young masters, allow an old man to mediate between you. I am not shortsighted in such matters—the mother of mischief is no bigger than a gnat's wing*

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down fifty instances in my own day, wh

Gallants have been confronted hardily,  
In single opposition, hand to hand,

, after the field was fought, no one could  
the cause of quarrel.—Tush ! a small thing v  
the taking of the wall—or the gentle rub of  
er in passing each other, or a hasty word, or  
nceived gesture—Come, forget your cause  
rel, be what it will—you have had your breathin  
I though you put up your rapiers unblooded, that v  
o default of yours, but by command of your elder, a  
ne who had right to use authority. In Malta, where  
duello is punctiliously well understood, the persons  
gaged in a single combat are bound to halt on the co  
mand of a knight, or priest, or lady, and the quarrel  
interrupted is held as honourably terminated, and m  
not be revived.—Nephew, it is, I think, impossible th  
you can nourish spleen against this young gentleman  
having fought for his king. Hear my honest propos  
Markham—You know I bear no malice, though I ha  
some reason to be offended with you—Give the you  
man your hand in friendship, and we will back to  
Lodge, all three together, and drink a cup of sack  
token of reconciliation.”

Markham Everard found himself unable to resist t  
approach towards kindness on his uncle's part.  
suspected, indeed, what was partly the truth, that it v  
not entirely from reviving goodwill, but also, that  
uncle thought, by such attention, to secure his neutral  
at least, if not his assistance, for the safety of the fugit  
royalist. He was sensible that he was placed in  
awkward predicament ; and that he might incur the  
picions of his own party, for holding intercourse  
with a near relation, who harboured such guests  
on the other hand, he thought his services to t

I know  
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## WOODSTOCK.

monwealth had been of sufficient importance to outweigh whatever envy might urge on that topic. Indeed, although the Civil War had divided families much, and in many various ways, yet when it seemed ended by the triumph of the republicans, the rage of political hatred began to relent, and the ancient ties of kindred and friendship regained at least a part of their former influence. Many reunions were formed; and those who, like Everard, adhered to the conquering party, often exerted themselves for the protection of their deserted relatives.

As these things rushed through his mind, accompanied with the prospect of a renewed intercourse with Alice Lee, by means of which he might be at hand to protect her against every chance, either of injury or insult, he held out his hand to the supposed Scottish page, saying at the same time, "That for his part, he was very ready to forget the cause of quarrel, or rather, to consider it as arising out of a misapprehension, and to offer Master Kerneguy such friendship as might exist between honourable men, who had embraced different sides in politics."

Unable to overcome the feeling of personal dignity, which prudence recommended to him to forget, Louis Kerneguy in return bowed low, but without accepting Everard's proffered hand.

"He had no occasion," he said, "to make any exertions to forget the cause of quarrel, for he had never been able to comprehend it; but as he had not shunned the gentleman's resentment, so he was now willing to embrace and return any degree of his favour, with which *he might be pleased to honour him.*"

*Everard withdrew his hand with a smile, and bowed in return to the salutation of the page, whose stiff reception of his advances he imputed to the proud pettish disposition of a Scotch boy, trained up in extravagant id*

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sequence and personal importance, which  
tance with the world had not yet been suffi-  
pel.

ry Lee, delighted with the termination of the  
which he supposed to be in deep deference to  
authority, and not displeased with the oppor-  
of renewing some acquaintance with his nephew,  
had, notwithstanding his political demerits, a  
er interest in his affections than he was, perhaps,  
self aware of, said, in a tone of consolation,  
Never be mortified, young gentlemen. I protest it  
ent to my heart to part you, when I saw you  
stretching yourselves so handsomely, and in fair love  
of honour, without any malicious or bloodthirsty  
thoughts. I promise you, had it not been for my duty  
as Ranger here, and sworn to the office, I would rather  
have been your umpire than your hindrance.—But a  
finished quarrel is a forgotten quarrel ; and your tilting  
should have no further consequence excepting the appe-  
tite it may have given you."

So saying, he urged forward his pony, and moved in  
triumph towards the Lodge by the nearest alley. His  
feet almost touching the ground, the ball of his toe just  
resting in the stirrup,—the forepart of the thigh brought  
round to the saddle,—the heels turned outwards, and  
sunk as much as possible,—his body precisely erect,—  
the reins properly and systematically divided in his left  
hand, his right holding a riding-rod diagonally pointed  
towards the horse's left ear,—he seemed a champion of  
the manège, fit to have reined Bucephalus himself. His  
youthful companions, who attended on either hand like  
equerries, could scarcely suppress a smile at the com-  
pletely adjusted and systematic posture of the rider, con-  
trasted with the wild and diminutive appearance of the  
pony, with its shaggy coat, and long tail and mane,  
and its keen eyes sparkling like red coals from amongst

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the mass of hair which fell over its small countenance. If the reader has the Duke of Newcastle's book on horsemanship (*splendida moles!*) he may have some idea of the figure of the good knight, if he can conceive such a figure as one of the cavaliers there represented, seated, in all the graces of his art, on a Welsh or Exmoor pony, in its native savage state, without grooming or discipline of any kind; the ridicule being greatly enhanced by the disproportion of size betwixt the animal and its rider.

Perhaps the knight saw their wonder, for the first words he said after they left the ground were, "Pixie, though small, is mettlesome, gentlemen" (here he contrived that Pixie should himself corroborate this assertion, by executing a gambade),—"he is diminutive but full of spirit;—indeed, save that I am somewhat too large for an elfin horseman" (the knight was upward of six feet high), "I should remind myself, when mount him, of the Fairy King, as described by Mil Drayton:—

Himself he on an earwig set,  
Yet scarce upon his back could get,  
So oft and high he did curvet,  
Ere he himself did settle.  
He made him stop, and turn, and bound,  
To gallop and to trot the round,  
He scarce could stand on any ground,  
He was so full of mettle."

"My old friend, Pixie," said Everard, striking pony's neck, "I am glad that he has survived all bustling days—Pixie must be above twenty years of Henry?"

"Above twenty years, certainly. Yes, nephew  
*ham, war is a whirlwind in a plantation, which  
spares what is least worth leaving. Old Pixie and  
master have survived many a tall fellow and ma*

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her of them good for much themselves. Yet, yes, an old man can do somewhat. So Pixie I survive."

ing, he again contrived that Pixie should show remnants of activity.

"Will survive?" said the young Scot, completing the piece which the good knight had left unfinished—, still survive,

To witch the world with noble horsemanship."

Everard coloured, for he felt the irony; but not so his uncle, whose simple vanity never permitted him to doubt the sincerity of the compliment.

"Are you avised of that?" he said. "In King James's time, indeed, I have appeared in the tilt-yard, and there you might have said—

You saw young Harry with his beaver up.

As to seeing *old* Harry, why"—Here the knight paused, and looked as a bashful man in labour of a pun—"As to old Harry—why, you might as well see the *devil*. You take me, Master Kerneguy—the devil, you know, is my namesake—ha—ha—ha!—Cousin Everard, I hope your precision is not startled by an innocent jest?"

He was so delighted with the applause of both his companions, that he recited the whole of the celebrated passage referred to, and concluded with defying the present age, bundle all its wits, Donne, Cowley, Waller, and the rest of them together, to produce a poet of a tenth part of the genius of old Will.

"Why, we are said to have one of his descendants among us—Sir William D'Avenant," said Louis Kerneguy; "and many think him as clever a fellow."

"What!" exclaimed Sir Henry—"Will D'Avenant whom I knew in the North, an officer under Newcastle when the Marquis lay before Hull?—why, he was



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honest cavalier, and wrote good doggerel enough ; but how came he akin to Will Shakspeare, I trow ? ”

“ Why,” replied the young Scot, “ by the surer side of the house, and after the old fashion, if D’Avenant speaks truth. It seems that his mother was a good-looking, laughing, buxom mistress of an inn between Stratford and London, at which Will Shakspeare often quartered as he went down to his native town ; and that, out of friendship and gossipred, as we say in Scotland, Will Shakspeare became godfather to Will D’Avenant ; and not contented with this spiritual affinity, the younger Will is for establishing some claim to a natural one, alleging that his mother was a great admirer of wit, and there were no bounds to her complaisance for men of genius.”

“ Out upon the hound ! ” said Colonel Everard ; “ would he purchase the reputation of descending from poet, or from prince, at the expense of his mother’s good fame ?—his nose ought to be slit.”

“ That would be difficult,” answered the disguised Prince, recollecting the peculiarity of the bard’s countenance.

“ Will D’Avenant the son of Will Shakspeare ! ” said the knight, who had not yet recovered his surprise at the enormity of the pretension ; “ why, it reminds me of a verse in the puppet-show of Phaeton, where the hero complains to his mother—

Besides, by all the village boys I am sham’d ;  
You the Sun’s son, you rascal, you be d—d !

I never heard such unblushing assurance in my life !—Will D’Avenant the son of the brightest and best poet *that ever was, is, or will be?*—But I crave your pardon, nephew.—You, I believe, love no stage plays.”

“ Nay, I am not altogether so precise as you would take me, uncle. I have loved them perhaps too well in

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now I condemn them not altogether, or in I approve not their excesses and extravagances, even in Shakspeare, but see many scandalous to decency and prejudicial to us—many things which tend to ridicule and recommend vice,—at least to mitigate the odiousness of its features. I cannot think these fine arts a useful study, and especially for the youth of the country, which bloodshed is pointed out as the chief employment of the men, and intrigue as the sole employment of the women."

In these observations, Everard was simple and frank, that he was only giving his uncle an opportunity of expressing a favourite opinion, without offending by any contradiction which was so limited and unimportant. But here, as on other occasions, he forgot that his uncle was in his views, whether of policy, or taste, and that it would be as easy to oppose the Presbyterian form of government, or to take the abjuration oath, as to shake his head at Shakspeare. There was another peculiarity in his mode of arguing, which Everard, being of a plain and downright character, and one whose tenets were in some degree unfavourable to dissensions and simulations often used in society, did not perfectly understand. Sir Henry, sensible of his own heat of temper, was wont scrupulously to restrain himself, and would for some time, when, in fact, he was about to conduct a debate with all the external calmness and composure, till the violence of his feelings rose so high as to overcome and bear away the arguments he opposed to it, and rush down upon the antagonist with accumulating wrath. It thus frequently happened that, like a wily old general, he retreated in the first instance, disputant in good order and by degrees, till he attained a degree of resistance, as to draw on

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## WOODSTOCK.

his antagonist's pursuit to the spot, where, at length, making a sudden and unexpected attack, with horse, foot, and artillery at once, he seldom failed to confound the enemy, though he might not overthrow him.

It was on this principle, therefore, that, hearing Everard's last observation, he disguised his angry feelings, and answered, with a tone where politeness was called in to keep guard upon passion, "That undoubtedly the Presbyterian gentry had given, through the whole of these unhappy times, such proofs of a humble, unaspiring, and unambitious desire of the public good, as entitled them to general credit for the sincerity of those very strong scruples which they entertained against works, in which the noblest sentiments of religion and virtue,—sentiments which might convert hardened sinners, and be placed with propriety in the mouths of dying saints and martyrs, happened, from the rudeness and coarse taste of the times, to be mixed with some broad jests, and similar matter, which lay not much in the way, excepting of those who painfully sought such stuff out, that they might use it in vilifying what was in itself deserving of the highest applause. But what he wished especially to know from his nephew was, whether any of those gifted men, who had expelled the learned scholars and deep divines of the Church of England from the pulpit, and now flourished in their stead, received any inspiration from the muses (if he might use so profane a term without offence to Colonel Everard), or whether they were not as sottishly and brutally averse from elegant letters, as they were from humanity and common sense?"

Colonel Everard might have guessed, by the ironical *tone in which this speech was delivered*, what storm was *mustering within his uncle's bosom*—nay, he might have *conjectured the state of the old knight's feelings from his emphasis on the word Colonel*, by which epithet, *as*

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hat which most connected his nephew with the party he hated, he never distinguished Everard, unless when his wrath was rising ; while, on the contrary, when disposed to be on good terms with him, he usually called him Kinsman, or Nephew Markham. Indeed, it was under a partial sense that this was the case, and in the hope to see his cousin Alice, that the Colonel forebore making any answer to the harangue of his uncle, which had concluded just as the old knight had alighted at the door of the Lodge, and was entering the hall, followed by his two attendants.

Phœbe at the same time made her appearance in the hall, and received orders to bring some "beverage" for the gentlemen. The Hebe of Woodstock failed not to recognise and welcome Everard by an almost imperceptible curtsy ; but she did not serve her interest, as she designed, when she asked the knight, as a question of course, whether he commanded the attendance of Mistress Alice. A stern *No*, was the decided reply ; and the ill-timed interference seemed to increase his previous irritation against Everard for his depreciation of *Shakspeare*. "I would insist," said Sir Henry, resuming the obnoxious subject, "were it fit for a poor disbanded cavalier to use such a phrase towards a commander of the conquering army,—upon knowing whether the convulsion which has sent us saints and prophets without end, has not also afforded us a poet with enough both of gifts and grace to outshine poor old Will, the oracle and idol of us blinded and carnal cavaliers ?"

"Surely, sir," replied Colonel Everard ; "I know verses written by a friend of the Commonwealth, and those, too, of a dramatic character, which, weighed in an impartial scale, might equal even the poetry of *Shakspeare*, and which are free from the fustian and indelicacy with which that great bard was sometimes content to feed the coarse appetites of his barbarous audience."

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"Indeed!" said the knight, keeping down his wrath with difficulty. "I should like to be acquainted with his masterpiece of poetry!—May we ask the name of this distinguished person?"

"It must be Vicars, or Withers, at least," said the feigned page.

"No, sir," replied Everard, "nor Drummond of Hawthornden, nor Lord Stirling neither. And yet the verses will vindicate what I say, if you will make allowance for indifferent recitation, for I am better accustomed to speak to a battalion than to those who love the muses. The speaker is a lady benighted, who, having lost her way in a pathless forest, at first expresses herself agitated by the supernatural fears to which her situation gave rise."

"A play, too, and written by a roundhead author!" said Sir Henry in surprise.

"A dramatic production at least," replied his nephew; and began to recite simply, but with feeling, the lines now so well known, but which had then obtained no celebrity, the fame of the author resting upon the basis rather of his polemical and political publications, than on the poetry doomed in after days to support the eternal structure of his immortality.

"These thoughts may startle, but will not astound  
The virtuous mind, that ever walks attended  
By a strong-siding champion, Conscience."

"My own opinion, nephew Markham, my own opinion," said Sir Henry, with a burst of admiration "better expressed, but just what I said when the scoundrelly roundheads pretended to see ghosts: *Woodstock—Go on, I prithee.*"

*Everard proceeded:—*

*"O welcome, pure-eyed Faith, white-handed Hope,  
Thou hovering angel, girt with golden wings,  
And thou unblemish'd form of Chastity!"*

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see ye visibly, and now believe  
That he the Supreme Good, to whom all things ill  
Are but as slavish officers of vengeance,  
Would send a glistering guardian, if need were,  
To keep my life and honour unassail'd.—  
Was I deceived, or did a sable cloud,  
Turn forth her silver lining on the night ?”

“The rest has escaped me,” said the reciter ; “and I marvel I have been able to remember so much.”

Sir Henry Lee, who had expected some effusion very different from those classical and beautiful lines, soon changed the scornful expression of his countenance, relaxed his contorted upper lip, and, stroking down his beard with his left hand, rested the forefinger of the right upon his eyebrow, in sign of profound attention. After Everard had ceased speaking, the old man sighed as at the end of a strain of sweet music. He then spoke in a gentler manner than formerly.

“Cousin Markham,” he said, “these verses flow sweetly, and sound in my ears like the well-touched warbling of a lute. But thou knowest I am something slow of apprehending the full meaning of that which I hear for the first time. Repeat me these verses again, slowly and deliberately ; for I always love to hear poetry twice, the first time for sound, and the latter time for sense.”

Thus encouraged, Everard recited again the lines with more hardihood and better effect ; the knight distinctly understanding, and from his looks and motions, highly applauding them.

“Yes !” he broke out, when Everard was again silent —“Yes, I *do* call that poetry—though it were even written by a Presbyterian, or an Anabaptist either. Ay, *there were* good and righteous people to be found even amongst the offending towns which were destroyed by fire. And certainly I have heard, though with little

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credence (begging your pardon, cousin Everard), that there are men among you who have seen the error of their ways in rebelling against the best and kindest of masters, and bringing it to that pass that he was murdered by a gang yet fiercer than themselves. Ay, doubtless, the gentleness of spirit, and the purity of mind, which dictated those beautiful lines, has long ago taught a man so amiable to say, I have sinned, I have sinned. Yes, I doubt not so sweet a harp has been broken, even in remorse, for the crimes he was witness to ; and now he sits drooping for the shame and sorrow of England,—all his noble rhymes, as Will says,

Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh.

Dost thou not think so, Master Kerneguy ? ”

“ Not I, Sir Henry,” answered the page, somewhat maliciously.

“ What, dost not believe the author of these lines must needs be of the better file, and leaning to our persuasion ? ”

“ I think, Sir Henry, that the poetry qualifies the author to write a play on the subject of Dame Potiphar and her recusant lover ; and as for his calling—that last metaphor of the cloud in a black coat or cloak, with silver lining, would have dubbed him a tailor with me, only that I happen to know that he is a schoolmaster by profession, and by political opinions qualified to be Poet Laureate to Cromwell ; for what Colonel Everard has repeated with such unction, is the production of no less celebrated a person than John Milton.”

“ John Milton ! ” exclaimed Sir Henry in astonishment — “ What ! John Milton, the blasphemous and bloody-minded author of the *Defensio Populi Anglicani* !—the advocate of the infernal High Court of Fiends ; the creature and parasite of that grand impostor, that loathsome hypocrite, that detestable monster, that prodigy

## WOODSTOCK.

erse, that disgrace of mankind, that landscape  
uity, that sink of sin, and that compendium of  
ss, Oliver Cromwell ! ”

Even the same John Milton,” answered Charles ;  
oolmaster to little boys, and tailor to the clouds,  
ach he furnishes with suits of black, lined with silver,  
no other expense than that of common sense.”

“Markham Everard,” said the old knight, “I will  
never forgive thee—never, never. Thou hast made me  
speak words of praise respecting one whose offal should  
fatten the region-kites. Speak not to me, sir, but be-  
gone ! Am I, your kinsman and benefactor, a fit person  
to be juggled out of my commendation and eulogy, and  
brought to bedaub such a whitened sepulchre as the  
sophist Milton ? ”

“I profess,” said Everard, “this is hard measure, Sir  
Henry. You pressed me—you defied me to produce  
poetry as good as Shakspeare’s. I only thought of the  
verses, not of the politics of Milton.”

“O yes, sir,” replied Sir Henry, “we well know your  
power of making distinctions ; you could make war  
against the King’s prerogative, without having the least  
design against his person. Oh, Heaven forbid ! But  
Heaven will hear and judge you.—Set down the bever-  
age, Phoebe ”—(this was added by way of parenthesis to  
Phoebe, who entered with refreshment)—“Colonel Eve-  
rard is not thirsty.—You have wiped your mouths, and  
said you have done no evil. But though you have de-  
ceived man, yet God you cannot deceive. And you  
shall wipe no lips in Woodstock, either after meat or  
drink, I promise you.”

Charged thus at once with the faults imputed to his  
whole religious sect and political party, Everard felt too  
*late of what imprudence he had been guilty in giving the*  
*opening, by disputing his uncle’s taste in drama*  
*poetry. He endeavoured to explain—to apologise.*



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ing of our literature;  
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## WOODSTOCK.

" said the page, in the most eq  
in his face with the most uncon

h to know, sir," retorted Everard,  
at which you said just now?"

ly a pouring out of the spirit, wort  
Kerneguy—"a small skiff despatched  
my own account, to keep company with  
tion just now expressed."

"Sir, I have known a merry gentleman's  
such a smile as you wear just now," repli  
"There, look you now!" answered th  
ge, who could not weigh even the tho  
ety against the enjoyment of his jest—"I  
ck to your *professions*, worthy sir, you  
oked by this time; but your round execr  
e a cork from a bottle of cider, and now  
ath to come foaming out after it, in the  
ptized language of common ruffians."

"For Heaven's sake, Master Girnecy," s  
orbear giving the Colonel these bitter w  
you, good Colonel Markham, scorn to t  
his hands—he is but a boy."

"If the Colonel or you choose, Mrs. Phœl  
d me a man—I think the gentleman can  
ng to the purpose already.—Probably he  
nd to you the part of the Lady in Comus  
pe his own admiration of John Milton wil  
n to undertake the part of Samson Ag  
w up this old house with execrations, or  
wrath about our ears."

"Young man," said the Colonel, still in t  
m, "if you respect my principles for no  
teful to the protection which, but for the  
easily attain."

Nay, then," said the attendant, "I  
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who have more influence with you than I have," and away tripped Phœbe; while Kerneguy answered Everard in the same provoking tone of calm indifference,—

"Before you menace me with a thing so formidable as your resentment, you ought to be certain whether I may not be compelled by circumstances to deny you the opportunity you seem to point at."

At this moment Alice, summoned no doubt by her attendant, entered the hall hastily.

"Master Kerneguy," she said, "my father requests to see you in Victor Lee's apartment."

Kerneguy arose and bowed, but seemed determined to remain till Everard's departure, so as to prevent any explanation betwixt the cousins.

"Markham," said Alice, hurriedly—"Cousin Everard—I have but a moment to remain here—for God's sake do you instantly begone! be cautious and patient—but do not tarry here—my father is fearfully incensed."

"I have had my uncle's word for that, madam," replied Everard, "as well as his injunction to depart, which I will obey without delay. I was not aware that you would have seconded so harsh an order quite so willingly; but I go, madam, sensible I leave those behind whose company is more agreeable."

"Unjust—ungenerous—ungrateful!" said Alice; but, fearful her words might reach ears for which they were not designed, she spoke them in a voice so feeble, that her cousin, for whom they were intended, lost the consolation they were calculated to convey.

He bowed coldly to Alice, as taking leave, and said, with an air of that constrained courtesy which sometimes covers, among men of condition, the most deadly hatred, "*I believe, Master Kerneguy, that I must make it convenient at present to suppress my own peculiar opinions on the matter which we have hinted at in our converse*"

## WOODSTOCK.

ase I will send a gentleman, who, I hope,  
conquer yours."

sed Scotsman made him a stately, and at  
time a condescending bow, said he should  
the honour of his commands, offered his hand  
ress Alice, to conduct her back to her father's  
ent, and took a triumphant leave of his rival.  
ard, on the other hand, stung beyond his patience,  
from the grace and composed assurance of the  
th's carriage, still conceiving him to be either Wilmot,  
some of his compeers in rank and profligacy, returned  
the town of Woodstock, determined not to be out-  
bearded, even though he should seek redress by means  
which his principles forbade him to consider as justi-  
fiable.

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## CHAP. XXVI.

—— *Boundless intemperance*

*In nature is a tyranny— it hath been*

*The untimely emptying of many a throne,*

*And fall of many kings——* MACBETH.

**W**HILE Colonel Everard retreated in high indig-  
nation from the little refection, which Sir Henry  
Lee had in his good humour offered, and with-  
drawn under the circumstances of provocation which we  
have detailed, the good old knight, scarce recovered  
from his fit of passion, partook of it with his daughter  
and guest, and shortly after, recollecting some silvan  
task (for, though to little efficient purpose, he still  
regularly attended to his duties as Ranger), he called  
Bevis, and went out, leaving the two young people  
together.

"Now," said the amorous Prince to himself, "that  
Alice is left without her lion, it remains to see whether

**WOODSTOCK.**—So, Sir Bevis has left  
 gress breed.—I thought the knights of  
 loud; "I thought the knights of  
 of which he is so fit a repre-  
 in maintaining a vigilant

nettoers in  
 verses.

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 good lute,  
 show whether  
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## WOODSTOCK.

gay and roving train had adapted English

an hour with thee !—When earliest day  
Dapples with gold the eastern grey,  
Oh, what can frame my mind to bear  
The toil and turmoil, cark and care,  
New griefs, which coming hours unfold,  
And sad remembrance of the old?—

One hour with thee !

One hour with thee !—When burning June  
Waves his red flag at pitch of noon ;  
What shall repay the faithful swain,  
His labour on the sultry plain ;  
And more than cave or sheltering bough,  
Cool feverish blood, and throbbing brow?

One hour with thee !

One hour with thee !—When sun is set,  
Oh ! what can teach me to forget  
The thankless labours of the day ;  
The hopes, the wishes, flung away ;  
The increasing wants, and lessening gains,  
The master's pride, who scorns my pains?—

One hour with thee !

"Truly, there is another verse," said the songster ;  
"but I sing it not to you, Mistress Alice, because some  
of the prudes of the court liked it not."

"I thank you, Master Louis," answered the young  
lady, "both for your discretion in singing what has given  
me pleasure, and in forbearing what might offend me.  
Though a country girl, I pretend to be so far of the court  
mode, as to receive nothing which does not pass current  
among the better class there."

"I would," answered Louis, "that you were so well  
confirmed in their creed, as to let all pass with you to  
which court ladies give currency."

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be the consequence?" said he

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## WOODSTOCK.

he daughter of Sir Henry Lee, sir ; and you are, less to be, Master Louis Kerneguy, my brother's and a fugitive for shelter under my father's roof, incurs danger by the harbour he affords you, and se household, therefore, ought not to be disturbed your displeasing importunities."

I would to Heaven, fair Alice," said the King, hat your objections to the suit which I am urging, ot in jest, but most seriously, as that on which my happiness depends, rested only on the low and precarious station of Louis Kerneguy !—Alice, thou hast the soul of thy family, and must needs love honour. I am no more the needy Scottish page, whom I have, for my own purposes, personated, than I am the awkward lout, whose manners I adopted on the first night of our acquaintance. This hand, poor as I seem, can confer a coronet."

"Keep it," said Alice, "for some more ambitious damsel, my lord—for such I conclude is your title, if this romance be true—I would not accept your hand, could you confer a duchy."

"In one sense, lovely Alice, you have neither over-rated my power nor my affection. It is your King—it is Charles Stuart who speaks to you !—he can confer duchies, and if beauty can merit them, it is that of Alice Lee. Nay, nay—rise—do not kneel—it is for your sovereign to kneel to thee, Alice, to whom he is a thousand times more devoted than the wanderer Louis dared venture to profess himself. My Alice has, I know, been trained up in those principles of love and obedience to her sovereign, that she cannot, in conscience or in mercy, inflict on him such a wound as would be implied in the rejection of his suit."

*In spite of all Charles's attempts to prevent her, Alice had persevered in kneeling on one knee, until she had touched with her lip the hand with which he attempt*



OOK.

ion ended, she stood up on her bosom—her look, and watchful, and so flattered by the common supposition would have been new in what terms next to

lent," he said, " my pretty influence with thee than

ice," said Alice ; " for by my best wishes, my earnest which, as the men of the ready to testify with their seal, if necessary, with the ties of a true and devoted to Alice Lee than poor could have tendered and which can but offer a contaminated

mistake," said the King to speak to you—sit down

answered Alice. " What Britain—I, the daughter of my father's roof? But let us ; and though I might, to my King I must obey of a subject, unless when that I do not acknowledge

his dignity.

Charles, though young, being no novice in such scenes was surprised to encounter resistance of a kind which had not been opposed to him in similar pursuits, even in cases where he had been unsuccessful. There was neither anger, nor injured pride, nor disorder.

ds of the King.

'She is ambitious," thought Charles ; "it is by dazzling her love of glory, not by mere passionate entreaties, that I must hope to be successful.—"I pray you be seated, my fair Alice," he said ; "the lover entreats—the King commands you."

"The King," said Alice, "may permit the relaxation of the ceremonies due to royalty, but he cannot abrogate the subject's duty, even by express command. I stand here while it is your Majesty's pleasure to address me—a patient listener, as in duty bound."

"Know, then, simple girl," said the King, "that in accepting my proffered affection and protection, you break through no law either of virtue or morality. Those who are born to royalty are deprived of many of the comforts of private life—chiefly that which is, perhaps, the dearest and most precious, the power of choosing their own mates for life. Their formal weddings are guided upon principles of political expedience only, and those to whom they are wedded are frequently, in temper, person, and disposition, the most unlikely to make them happy. Society has commiseration, therefore, towards us, and binds our unwilling and often unhappy wedlocks with chains of a lighter and more easy character than those which fetter other men, whose marriage ties, as more voluntarily assumed, ought, in proportion, to be more strictly binding. And therefore, ever since the time that old Henry built these walls, priests and prelates, as well as nobles and statesmen,

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## WOODSTOCK.

vate union gives her no title to be Queen of England."

"My ambition," said Alice, "will be sufficiently gratified to see Charles as a king, without aiming to share either his dignity in public, or his wealth and regal luxury in private."

"I understand thee, Alice," said the king, hurt but not displeased. "You ridicule me, being a fugitive, for speaking like a king. It is a habit, I admit, which I have learned, and of which even misfortune cannot cure me. But my case is not so desperate as you may suppose. My friends are still many in these kingdoms ; my allies abroad are bound, by regard to their own interest, to espouse my cause. I have hopes given me from Spain, from France, and from other nations ; and I have confidence that my father's blood has not been poured forth in vain, nor is doomed to dry up without due vengeance. My trust is in Him from whom princes derive their title, and, think what thou wilt of my present condition, I have perfect confidence that I shall one day sit on the throne of England."

"May God grant it !" said Alice ; "and that he *may* grant it, noble Prince, deign to consider whether you now pursue a conduct likely to conciliate his favour. Think of the course you recommend to a motherless maiden, who has no better defence against your sophistry than what a sense of morality, together with the natural feeling of female dignity, inspires. Whether the death of her father, which would be the consequence of her imprudence ; whether the despair of her brother, whose life has been so often in peril to save that of your Majesty ;—whether the dishonour of the roof which has sheltered you will read well in your annals, or are events likely to *propitiate* God, whose controversy with your House has been but too visible, or recover the affections of the people of England, in whose eyes such actions are

## WOODSTOCK.

an abomination, I leave to your own royal mind to consider."

Charles paused, struck with a turn to the conversation which placed his own interests more in collision with the gratification of his present passion than he had supposed.

"If your Majesty," said Alice, curtsying deeply, "has no further commands for my attendance, may I be permitted to withdraw?"

"Stay yet a little, strange and impracticable girl," said the King, "and answer me but one question:—Is it the lowness of my present fortunes that makes my suit contemptible?"

"I have nothing to conceal, my liege," she said, "and my answer shall be as plain and direct as the question you have asked. If I could have been moved to an act of ignominious, insane, and ungrateful folly, it could only arise from my being blinded by that passion, which I believe is pleaded as an excuse for folly and for crime much more often than it has a real existence. I must, in short, have been in love, as it is called—and that might have been with my equal, but surely never with my sovereign, whether such only in title, or in possession of his kingdom."

"Yet loyalty was ever the pride, almost the ruling passion, of your family, Alice," said the King.

"And could I reconcile that loyalty," said Alice, "with indulging my sovereign, by permitting him to prosecute a suit dishonourable to himself as to me? Ought I, a faithful subject, to join him in a folly, which might be yet another stumbling-block in the path to his restoration and could only serve to diminish his security, even if he were seated upon his throne?"

"At this rate," said Charles, discontentedly, "I better have retained my character of the page assumed that of a sovereign, which it seems is still irreconcilable with my wishes."

## WOODSTOCK.

"our shall go still farther," said Alice. "I felt as little for Louis Kerneguy as for the In ; for such love as I have to bestow (and it is I read of in romance, or hear poured forth has been already conferred on another object. Your Majesty pain—I am sorry for it—but the medicines are often bitter."

answered the King, with some asperity, "and are reasonable enough to expect their patients to bear them, as if they were honeycomb. It is true, I whispered tale of the cousin Colonel ; and the the loyal Lee has set her heart upon a retic ?"

He was given ere I knew what these words rebel meant. I recalled it not, for I am satisfied amidst the great distractions which divide the person to whom you allude has chosen his duty perhaps, but conscientiously—he, therefore, the highest place in my affection and esteem. I cannot have, and will not ask, until some happy reconcile these public differences, and my father be reconciled to him. Devoutly do I pray the event may occur by your Majesty's speedy glorious restoration !"

"We found out a reason," said the King, pettishly, "make me detest the thought of such a change in you, Alice, any sincere interest to pray for it. I rarely, do you not see that your lover, walking with Cromwell, may, or rather must, share his day, if Lambert does not anticipate him, he will tread Oliver's heels, and reign in his stead. And yet he will find means to overcome the pride of the masses, and achieve a union, for which things are valued more than that which Cromwell is said to have wrought with one of his brats and the no less loyal Lambert ?"

now without wealth—without state, almost without a sheltering home and needful food—it is because he spent *all in the service of the King*. He needed not to commit *any act of treachery or villany to obtain wealth—he had an ample competence in his own possessions*. For *Madham Everard—he knows no such thing as selfishness*

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uld not, for broad England, had she the treasures  
u in her bosom, and a paradise on her surface, do  
d that would disgrace his own name, or injure  
elings of another—Kings, my liege, may take a  
n from him. My liege, for the present I take my  
e."

'Alice, Alice—stay!' exclaimed the King. "She is  
one.—This must be virtue—real, disinterested, over-  
awing virtue—or there is no such thing on earth. Yet  
Wilmot and Villiers will not believe a word of it, but add  
the tale to the other wonders of Woodstock. 'Tis a rare  
wench! and I profess, to use the Colonel's obtestation,  
that I know not whether to forgive and be friends with  
her, or study a dire revenge. If it were not for that  
accursed cousin—that Puritan Colonel—I could forgive  
everything else to so noble a wench. But a roundheaded  
rebel preferred to me—the preference avowed to my face,  
and justified with the assertion, that a king might take a  
lesson from him—it is gall and wormwood. If the old  
man had not come up this morning as he did, the King  
should have taken or given a lesson, and a severe one.  
It was a mad rencontre to venture upon with my rank  
and responsibility—and yet this wench has made me so  
angry with her, and so envious of him, that if an oppor-  
tunity offered, I should scarce be able to forbear him.—  
Ha! whom have we here?"

The interjection at the conclusion of this royal soliloquy  
was occasioned by the unexpected entrance of another  
personage of the drama.





message, such as I am charged with, to a son."

"get to the business, sir, if you please," said  
—"you have a message for me, you say?"

"sir," replied Wildrake; "I am the friend of Markham Everard, sir, a tall man, and a worthy in the field, although I could wish him a better  
—A message I have to you, it is certain, in a slight which I take the liberty of presenting with the usual formalities." So saying, he drew his sword, put the point at the place he mentioned upon the point, and making a profound bow, presented it to Charles.

The disguised Monarch accepted of it, with a grave return of the salute, and said, as he was about to open the letter, "I am not, I presume, to expect friendly contents in an epistle presented in so hostile a manner?"

"A-hem, sir," replied the ambassador, clearing his voice, while he arranged a suitable answer, in which the mild strain of diplomacy might be properly maintained; "not utterly hostile, I suppose, sir, is the invitation, though it be such as must be construed in the commencement rather bellicose and pugnacious. I trust, sir, we shall find that a few thrusts will make a handsome conclusion of the business; and so, as my old master used to say, *Pax nascitur ex bello*. For my own poor share, I am truly glad to have been graced by my friend, Markham Everard, in this matter—the rather as I feared the puritan principles with which he is imbued (I will confess the truth to you, worthy sir), might have rendered him unwilling, from certain scruples, to have taken the gentlemanlike and honourable mode of righting himself in such a case as the present. And as I render a friend's duty to my friend, so I humbly hope, Master Louis Girnigo, that I do no injustice to you in preparing the way for the proposed meeting, where, give me leave to say, I trust, that if no fatal accident occur with

WOODSTOCK.  
friends when the skirmish is over

"In any case," said Charles,  
"worse than mortal enemies we  
that footing upon which this

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such a person."

King is much obliged to you, sir," said the  
for the honour you do his faithful subjects."

sir, I am scrupulous on that point—very scrupu-  
When there is a roundhead in question, I consult  
erald's books, to see that he is entitled to bear  
as is Master Markham Everard, without which,  
omise you, I had borne none of his cartel. But a  
valier is with me a gentleman, of course—Be his  
rth ever so low, his loyalty has ennobled his con-  
dition."

"It is well, sir," said the King. "This paper re-  
quests me to meet Master Everard at six to-morrow  
morning, at the tree called the King's Oak.—I object  
neither to place nor time. He proffers the sword, at  
which, he says, we possess some equality—I do not  
decline the weapon; for company, two gentlemen—I  
shall endeavour to procure myself an associate, and a  
suitable partner for you, sir, if you incline to join in the  
dance."

"I kiss your hand, sir, and rest yours, under a sense  
of obligation," answered the envoy.

"I thank you, sir," continued the King; "I will  
therefore be ready at place and time, and suitably fur-  
nished; and I will either give your friend such satisfac-  
tion with my sword as he requires, or will render him  
such cause for not doing so as he will be contented  
with."

"You will excuse me, sir," said Wildrake, "if my  
mind is too dull, under the circumstances, to conceive  
any alternative that can remain betwixt two men of  
honour in such a case, excepting—sa—sa—." He threw  
himself into a fencing position, and made a pass with

It be all better -  
we were before it began.  
I should suppose so, sir, in any case.  
sir at the letter; "worse than mortal en-  
be, and it is footing upon which -

"It is, sir, a  
pacific  
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## WOODSTOCK.

to any gentleman who has served the King, ys hold as a sort of letters of nobility in refore, would on no account decline the sh a person."

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## WOODSTOCK.

his sheathed rapier, but not directed towards the person of the King, whom he addressed.

"Excuse me, sir," said Charles, "if I do not trouble your intellects with the consideration of a case which may not occur.—But, for example, I may plead urgent employment on the part of the public."—This he spoke in a low and mysterious tone of voice, which Wildrake appeared perfectly to comprehend; for he laid his forefinger on his nose with what he meant for a very intelligent and apprehensive nod.

"Sir," said he, "if you be engaged in any affair for the King, my friend shall have every reasonable degree of patience—Nay, I will fight him myself in your stead, merely to stay his stomach, rather than you should be interrupted.—And, sir, if you can find room in your enterprise for a poor gentleman that has followed Lunsford and Goring, you have but to name day, time, and place of rendezvous; for truly, sir, I am tired of the scald hat, cropped hair, and undertaker's cloak, with which my friend has bedizened me, and would willingly ruffle it out once more in the King's cause, when whether I be banged or hanged, I care not."

"I shall remember what you say, sir, should an opportunity occur," said the King; "and I wish his Majesty had many such subjects.—I presume our business is now settled?"

"When you shall have been pleased, sir, to give me a trifling scrap of writing, to serve for my credentials—for such, you know, is the custom—your written cartel hath its written answer."

"That, sir, will I presently do," said Charles, "and in good time—here are the materials."

"And, sir," continued the envoy—"Ahi! ahem!—if you have interest in the household for a cup of sack—I am a man of few words, and am somewhat hoarse with much speaking—moreover, a serious business of this

## WOODSTOCK.

It makes one thirsty.—Besides, sir, to part  
as argues malice, which God forbid should  
be an honourable conjuncture."

Not boast much influence in the house, sir,"  
saying; "but if you would have the condescen-  
scent of this broad piece towards quenching  
at the George"—

Did the cavalier (for the times admitted of this  
species of courtesy, nor was Wildrake a man of  
great delicacy as keenly to dispute the matter),—  
be again beholden to you. But I see not how  
with my honour to accept of such accom-  
pany unless you were to accompany and partake?"  
To me, sir," replied Charles, "my safety re-  
quires that I remain rather private at present."

He said," Wildrake observed; "poor cavaliers  
and on ceremony. I see, sir, you understand  
—when one tall fellow has coin, another must  
suffer. I wish you, sir, a continuance of health  
and happiness until to-morrow, at the King's Oak, at  
"

All, sir," said the King, and added, as Wild-  
rake went down the stair whistling "Hey for cavaliers,"  
with his long rapier, jarring against the steps and  
bore no unsuitable burden—"Farewell, thou  
ornament of the state to which war, and defeat,  
sir, have reduced many a gallant gentle-

For the rest of the day there occurred nothing  
deserving of notice. Alice sedulously avoided  
towards the disguised Prince any degree of  
interest or shyness which could be discovered by  
her or by any one else. To all appearance the  
persons continued on the same footing in-  
timate. Yet she made the gallant himself sensible,  
parent intimacy was assumed merely to save



kingdom a young man who could not command his own temper? To this was to be added, the consideration that even his success would add double difficulties to his escape, which already seemed sufficiently precarious. If, stopping short of death, he merely had the better of his antagonist, how did he know that he might not take revenge by delivering up to government the Mallig

her arguments  
to a temper rendered irritable by  
artification. In the first place, if I  
as also a gentleman, entitled to respect  
ed to give or claim the satisfaction  
sion of differences among gentlemen.

n, she urged, he could never lose interest  
himself ready, instead of sheltering him  
royal birth and pretensions, to come forward  
and maintain what he had done or said  
responsibility. In a free nation, it seemed  
would rather gain than lose in the public  
conduct which could not but seem gallant  
ous. Then a character for courage was  
necessary to support his pretensions than a  
reputation ; and the lying under a challenge  
plying to it, might bring his spirit in  
That would Villiers and Wilmot say of a  
which he had allowed himself to be shamed  
a country gentleman.

## WOODSTOCK.

was in the flower of his youth, active in all his exercises and no way inferior to Colonel Everard, as far as the morning's experiment had gone, in that of self-defence. At least, such recollection might pass through his royal mind, as he hummed to himself a well-known ditty which he had picked up during his residence in Scotland—

A man may drink and not be drunk;  
A man may fight and not be slain;  
A man may kiss a bonnie lass,  
And yet be welcome back again.

Meanwhile the busy and all-directing Dr. Rochecliff had contrived to intimate to Alice that she must give him a private audience, and she found him by appointment in what was called the study, once filled with ancient books, which, long since converted into cartridges, had made more noise in the world at their first exit, than during the space which had intervened between that and their first publication. The Doctor seated himself in a high-backed leathern easy-chair, and signed to Alice to fetch a stool and sit down beside him.

"Alice," said the old man, taking her hand affectionately, "thou art a good girl, a wise girl, a virtuous girl—one of those whose price is above rubies—not that *pari* is the proper translation—but remind me to tell you at that another time. Alice, thou knowest who this Lou Kerneguy is—nay, hesitate not to me—I know everything—I am well aware of the whole matter. Thou knowest this honoured house holds the fortunes of England." Alice was about to answer. "Nay, speak not, but listen to me, Alice—How does he bear himself towards you?"

Alice coloured with the deepest crimson. "I am a country-bred girl," she said, "and his manners are not court-like for me."

"Enough said—I know it all. Alice, he is ex-

## WOODSTOCK.

danger to-morrow, and you must be the  
s to prevent him."

ent him!—how, and in what manner?" said  
surprise. "It is my duty, as a subject, to do  
—anything that may become my father's daugh-

she stopped considerably embarrassed.

es," continued the Doctor, "to-morrow he hath  
; an appointment—an appointment with Markham  
ard; the hour and place are set—six in the morning,  
by the King's Oak. If they meet, one will probably fall."

"Now, may God forfend they should meet," said  
Alice, turning as suddenly pale as she had previously  
reddened. "But harm cannot come of it; Everard will  
never lift his sword against the King."

"For that," said Dr. Rochecliffe, "I would not war-  
rant. But if that unhappy young gentleman shall have  
still some reserve of the loyalty which his general con-  
duct entirely disavows, it would not serve us here; for  
he knows not the King, but considers him merely as a  
cavalier, from whom he has received injury."

"Let him know the truth, Doctor Rochecliffe, let him  
know it instantly," said Alice; "~~he~~ lift hand against the  
King, a fugitive and defenceless! He is incapable of it.  
My life on the issue, he becomes most active in his pre-  
servation."

"That is the thought of a maiden, Alice," answered  
the Doctor; "and, as I fear, of a maiden whose wisdom  
is misled by her affections. It were worse than treason to  
admit a rebel officer, the friend of the arch-traitor Crom-  
well, into so great a secret. I dare not answer for such  
rashness. Hammond was trusted by his father, and you  
know what came of it."

"Then let my father know. He will meet Markham,  
or send to him, representing the indignity done to him  
by attacking his guest."

aries which Sir Henry ...  
accommodation and defence which ...  
ly showed that the mere enthusiasm of ...  
d have led to a risk of discovery. It is you, Alice,  
, must save the hopes of every true royalist."  
I!" answered Alice; "it is impossible—Why cannot  
father be induced to interfere, as in behalf of his  
end and guest, though he know him as no other than  
ouis Kerneguy?"

"You have forgot your father's character, my young  
friend," said the Doctor; "an excellent man, and the  
best of Christians, till there is a clashing of swords, and  
then he starts up the complete martialist, as dealing  
every pacific reasoning as if he were a game cock."  
"You forget, Doctor Rochecliffe," said Alice, "that  
this very morning, if I understand the thing aright,  
father prevented them from fighting."

"Ay," answered the Doctor, "because he does  
himself bound to keep the peace in the Royal Park  
it was done with such regret, Alice, that, should I  
them at it again, I am clear to foretell he will only  
postpone the combat as to conduct them to some  
privileged ground, and there bid them tilt and v  
while he regaled his eyes with a scene so pleasing  
Alice, it is you, and you only, who can help  
extremity."

"I see no possibility," said she, again  
"how I can be of the least use."

"You must send a note," answered Dr. Rochecliffe,  
"to the King—a note such as all women can  
write better than any man can teach them—  
at the precise hour of the rendezvous."

his unhappy foible."

### WOODSTOCK.

"checliffe," said Alice, gravely,—“you  
from infancy,—What have you seen in  
you to believe that I should ever follow  
g counsel?”

I have known *me* from infancy,” retorted  
that have you seen of *me* that you should  
giving counsel to my friend's daughter,  
be misbecoming in her to follow? You  
enough, I think, to suppose, that I mean  
y your complaisance farther than to keep  
se for an hour or two, till I have all in  
is leaving this place, from which I can  
y the terrors of an alleged search?—So,  
is horse and rides off, and Mistress Alice  
our of saving him.”

expense of her own reputation,” said  
e risk of an eternal stain on my family.  
ow all. What can the King think of my  
assignment with him after what has  
w will it be possible to disabuse him re-  
rpose of my doing so?”

ise him, Alice ; I will explain the whole.”  
checliffe,” said Alice, “you propose what  
You can do much by your ready wit and  
but if new-fallen snow were once sullied,  
could wash it white again ; and it is alto-  
: with a maiden's reputation.”

learest child,” said the Doctor, “bethink  
commend this means of saving the life of  
ast rescuing him from instant peril, it is  
so other of which to avail myself. If I  
e, even for a moment, the semblance of  
it is but in the last extremity, and under  
hich cannot return—I will take the surest  
nt all evil report which can arise from  
nd.”

it was his during the what chance now

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uct, and.

## WOODSTOCK.

endeavoured to stifle her sobs with difficulty—"for consequence; but not in the imagination of a man, far less that man her sovereign, shall a thought of the Lee be associated with dishonour." She hid her face in her handkerchief, and burst out into unrestrained tears.

"What means this hysterical passion?" said Dr. Rochecliffe, surprised and somewhat alarmed by the vehemence of her grief—"Maiden, I must have no concealments; I must know."

"Exert your ingenuity, then, and discover it," said Alice—for a moment put out of temper at the Doctor's pertinacious self-importance—"Guess my purpose, as you can guess at every thing else. It is enough to have to go through my task, I will not endure the distress of telling it over, and that to one who—forgive me, dear Doctor—might not think my agitation on this occasion fully warranted."

"Nay, then, my young mistress, you must be ruled," said Rochecliffe; "and if I cannot make you explain yourself, I must see whether your father can gain so far on you." So saying, he arose somewhat displeased, and walked towards the door.

"You forget what you yourself told me, Doctor Rochecliffe," said Alice, "of the risk of communicating this great secret to my father."

"It is too true," he said, stopping short and turning round; "and I think, wench, thou art too smart for me, and I have not met many such. But thou art a good girl, and wilt tell me thy device of free will—it concerns my character and influence with the King, that I should be fully acquainted with whatever is *actum atque tractatum*, done and treated of in this matter."

"Trust your character to me, good Doctor," said Alice, attempting to smile; "it is of firmer stuff than those of women, and will be safer in my custody than mine



of a field of single combat.  
who appeared at the rendezvous was  
er Wildrake. He also was wrapped  
discarded his puritanic beaver, and  
Spanish hat, with a feather and gilt  
had encountered bad weather and  
make amends for the appearance  
ow of pretension, the castor was  
fier what was rather profanely  
used among the more desperate

"Tr  
elemen  
But coi  
it is ho  
is the  
traitors  
you, as  
them  
to fi  
air

...and Presbyterian step."

took his rapier from under his cloak, and  
to search the thickets around.

"I'll prevent him," whispered the Doctor.

"Keep faith with you—you shall not come  
*nisi dignis vindice nodus*—I'll explain that.

*Vindex* is feminine as well as masculine,  
and is defensible.—Keep you close."

Saying, he stepped forward on the esplanade  
to Wildrake.

"After Louis Kerneguy," said Wildrake, pulling

but instantly discovering his error, he said

"—I beg your pardon, sir—Fatter, shorter,

Kerneguy's friend, I suppose, with whom I

take a turn by and by.—And why not now

if your principals come up? just a snack to

strengthen the stomach, till the dinner is served

to you?"

"Open the orifice of the stomach."

## WOODSTOCK.

and other enemies of a similar description, preferring the vicinity of the dwellings of man, from whom he, almost solely among the feathered tribes, seems to experience disinterested protection.

The scene was therefore at once lovely and silent, when the good Doctor Rochecliffe, wrapped in a scarlet roquelaure, which had seen service in its day, muffling his face more from habit than necessity, and supporting Alice on his arm (she also defended by a cloak against the cold and damp of the autumn morning), glided through the tangled and long grass of the darkest alleys, almost ankle-deep in dew, towards the place appointed for the intended duel. Both so eagerly maintained the consultation in which they were engaged, that they were alike insensible of the roughness and discomforts of the road, though often obliged to force their way through brushwood and coppice, which poured down on them all the liquid pearls with which they were loaded, till the mantles they were wrapped in hung lank by their sides, and clung to their shoulders heavily charged with moisture. They stopped when they had attained a station under the coppice, and shrouded by it, from which they could see all that passed on the little esplanade before the King's Oak, whose broad and scathed form, contorted and shattered limbs, and frowning brows, made it appear like some ancient war-worn champion, well selected to be the umpire of a field of single combat.

The first person who appeared at the rendezvous was the gay cavalier Roger Wildrake. He also was wrapped in his cloak, but had discarded his puritanic beaver, and wore in its stead a Spanish hat, with a feather and gilt *hathband*, all of which had encountered bad weather and *hard service*; but to make amends for the appearance of poverty by the show of pretension, the castor was accurately adjusted after what was rather profane called the *d-me cut*, used among the more desperate

## WOODSTOCK.

: advanced hastily, and exclaimed aloud—  
: field after all, by Jove, though I bilked  
order to have my morning draught.—It has  
much good," he added, smacking his lips.—  
suppose I should search the ground ere my  
comes up, whose Presbyterian watch trudges  
as his Presbyterian step."

ook his rapier from under his cloak, and seemed  
to search the thickets around.

i will prevent him," whispered the Doctor to Alice.  
will keep faith with you—you shall not come on the  
ne—*nisi dignis vindice nodus*—I'll explain that another  
me. *Vindex* is feminine as well as masculine, so the  
quotation is defensible.—Keep you close."

So saying, he stepped forward on the esplanade, and  
bowed to Wildrake.

"Master Louis Kerneguy," said Wildrake, pulling off  
his hat; but instantly discovering his error, he added,  
"But no—I beg your pardon, sir—Fatter, shorter, older.  
—Mr. Kerneguy's friend, I suppose, with whom I hope  
to have a turn by and by.—And why not now, sir,  
before our principals come up? just a snack to stay the  
orifice of the stomach, till the dinner is served, sir?  
What say you?"

"To open the orifice of the stomach more likely, or to  
give it a new one," said the Doctor.

"True, sir," said Roger, who seemed now in his  
element; "you say well—that is as thereafter may be.—  
But come, sir, you wear your face muffled. I grant you,  
it is honest men's fashion at this unhappy time; the more  
is the pity. But we do all above board—we have no  
traitors here. I'll get into my gears first, to encourage  
you, and show you that you have to deal with a gen-  
tleman, who honours the King, and is a match for  
to fight with any who follow him, as doubtless you  
ir, since you are the friend of Master Louis Kernes

# WOODSTOCK.

while, Wildrake was busied undoing the clasps  
are-caped cloak.  
off, ye lendings," he said, "borrowings I should  
call you—

rich shadow'd Borgia."

Lodge thi  
you coul

"Well

want yo

Woods'

marrie

withou

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Do

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dis-  
loak,

as ev-

to

dozen

their tardiness.—Pshaw!" he

appointed tone, when the Down

showed his clerical dress; "Tush!"

af

d

see

fa

sometim

haste!"

"At the Lodge?" said the Doctor; "why,?"

the person

however, and his  
possibly interrupt a  
with peculiar satis-  
sume another tone.  
dear Doctor—I kis  
the thundering Jove  
am happy I have n  
your presence at  
or bury, or confess  
Heaven's sake."

stant—I was there later, I am sure, than  
 , who came the Woodstock road."

replied Wildrake, "it is at Woodstock they  
 —Rat it, did I say the Lodge?—No, no—  
 k—Mine host cannot be hanged—his daughter  
 —his bastard christened, or his wife buried—  
 the assistance of a *real* clergyman—Your Hold-  
 s won't do for them.—He's a true man, mine host ;  
 you value your function, make haste."

ou will pardon me, Master Wildrake," said the  
 tor—"I wait for Master Louis Kerneguy."

'The devil you do !' exclaimed Wildrake. "Why,  
 always knew the Scots could do nothing without their  
 minister ; but, d—n it, I never thought they put them to  
 this use neither. But I have known jolly customers in  
 orders, who understood to handle the sword as well as  
 their prayer-book. You know the purpose of our meet-  
 ing, Doctor. Do you come only as a ghostly comforter  
 —or as a surgeon, perhaps—or do you ever take bilboa  
 in hand?—Sa—sa !"

Here he made a fencing demonstration with his  
 sheathed rapier.

"I have done so, sir, on necessary occasion," said Dr.  
 Rochecliffe.

"Good sir, let this stand for a necessary one," said  
 Wildrake. "You know my devotion for the Church.  
 If a divine of your skill would do me the honour to ex-  
 change but three passes with me, I should think myself  
 happy for ever."

"Sir," said Rochecliffe, smiling, "were there no other  
 objection to what you propose, I have not the means—I  
 have no weapon."

"What? you want the *de quoi*? that is unlucky in-  
 deed. But you have a stout cane in your hand—what  
*hinders* our trying a pass (my rapier being sheathed of  
 course) until our principals come up? My pumps are

ROCK.

shall be a toe or two out of still all the time they are I fancy, Doctor, you are of r will not be a fight of cock-

to make it, if possible, be no ne.

r, but that is too spiteful," said it not for my respect for the resbyterian to be revenged."

le, if you please, sir," said the ess forward in that direction."—e agitation of his movements, in- intment, approached the spot where concealed.

not, I pray you, Doctor?" said the

ing a step he suddenly stopped short himself with a round oath of astonish at in the coppice, by all that is reveren t in the morning—*Whew—ew—ew!*"

to his surprise in a long, low, inter- then turning to the Doctor with side of his nose, "You're sly, Do it why not give me a hint of your— ere—your contraband goods? Gad, to expose the eccentricities of the Chi id Dr. Rochecliffe, "you are imperi served, and it were worth my while, I a."

Doctor, who had served long enough ave added some of the qualities of to those of a divine, actually raised finite delight of the rake, whose was by no means able to subdue

be  
y  
z

Doctor," said he, "if you wield your weapon  
d-fashion, in that way, and raise it as high as  
d, I shall be through you in a twinkling." So  
he made a pass with his sheathed rapier, not  
ly at the Doctor's person, but in that direction ;  
Rochecliffe, changing the direction of his cane  
the broadsword guard to that of the rapier, made  
cavalier's sword spring ten yards out of his hand,  
th all the dexterity of my friend Francalanza. At  
his moment both the principal parties appeared on the  
field.

Everard exclaimed angrily to Wildrake, "Is this your  
friendship? In Heaven's name what make you in that  
fool's jacket, and playing the pranks of a jack-pudding?"  
while his worthy second, somewhat crestfallen, held  
down his head like a boy caught in roguery, and went  
to pick up his weapon, stretching his head, as he passed,  
into the coppice, to obtain another glimpse, if possible,  
of the concealed object of his curiosity.

Charles, in the meantime, still more surprised at what  
he beheld, called out on his part—"What ! Doctor  
Rochecliffe become literally one of the church militant,  
and tilting with my friend cavalier Wildrake? May I  
use the freedom to ask him to withdraw, as Colonel  
Everard and I have some private business to settle?"

It was Dr. Rocheliffe's cue, on this important occa-  
sion to have armed himself with the authority of his  
sacred office, and used a tone of interference which might  
have overawed even a monarch, and made him feel that  
his monitor spoke by a warrant higher than his own.  
But the indiscreet latitude he had just given to his own  
passion, and the levity in which he had been detected,  
were very unfavourable to his assuming that superiority,  
*to which so uncontrollable a spirit as that of Charles,*  
*wilful as a prince, and capricious as a wit, was at all*  
*likely to submit.* The Doctor did, however, endeavour



#### WOODS FOUNTAIN.

to rally his dignity, and replied, with the gravest, and at the same time the most respectful, tone he could assume, that he also had business of the most urgent nature, which prevented him complying with Master Kerneguy's wishes, and leaving that spot.

"Excuse this untimely interruption," said Charles taking off his hat, and bowing to Colonel Everard "which I will immediately put an end to."

Everard gravely returned his salute, and was silent.

"Are you mad, Doctor Rochecliffe?" said Charles—"or are you deaf?—or have you forgotten your mother-tongue? I desired you to leave this place."

"I am not mad," said the divine, rousing up his resolution, and regaining the natural firmness of his voice—"I would prevent others from being so;—I am not deaf—I would pray others to hear the voice of reason and religion; I have not forgotten my mother-tongue—but I have come hither to speak the language of the Master of kings and princes."

"To fence with broomsticks, I should rather suppose," said the King—"Come, Doctor Rochecliffe, this sudden fit of assumed importance befits you as little as your late frolic. You are not, I apprehend, either Catholic priest or a Scotch Mass-John to claim devoted obedience from your hearers, but a Church-of-England man, subject to the rules of that Communion—and its HEAD." In speaking the last words, the King sunk his voice to a low and impressive whisper. Everard observing this drew back, the natural generosity of his temper directing him to avoid overhearing private discourse, in which the safety of the speakers might be deeply concerned. They continued, however, to observe great caution in their forms of expression.

"Master Kerneguy," said the clergyman, "it is not I who assume authority or control over your wishes; I forbid; I do but tell you what reason, Scrip

## WOODSTOCK.

igion, and morality, alike prescribe for your rule of conduct."

"And I, Doctor," said the King, smiling, and pointing to the unlucky cane, "will take your example rather than your precept. If a reverend clergyman will himself fight a bout at single stick, what right can he have to interfere in gentlemen's quarrels?—Come, sir, remove yourself, and do not let your present obstinacy cancel former obligations."

"Bethink yourself," said the divine,—“I can say one word which will prevent all this.”

"Do it," replied the King, "and in doing so belie the whole tenor and actions of an honourable life—abandon the principles of your Church, and become a perjured traitor and an apostate, to prevent another person from discharging his duty as a gentleman! This were indeed killing your friend to prevent the risk of his running himself into danger. Let the Passive Obedience, which is so often in your mouth, and no doubt in your head, put your feet for once into motion, and step aside for ten minutes. Within that space your assistance may be needed, either as body-curer or soul-curer."

"Nay, then," said Doctor Rochecliffe, "I have but one argument left."

While this conversation was carried on apart, Everard had almost forcibly detained by his own side his follower, Wildrake, whose greater curiosity, and lesser delicacy would otherwise have thrust him forward, to get, if possible, into the secret. But when he saw the Doctor turn into the coppice he whispered eagerly to Everard—"A gold Carolus to a commonwealth farthing, the Doctor has not only come to preach a peace, but he has brought the principal conditions along with him!"

Everard made no answer; he had already unsheathed his sword; and Charles hardly saw Rochecliffe's back.



## WOODSTOCK.

, will you oblige me by walking a little  
must change ground, it seems."

ady to attend you, sir," said Everard, who  
ad his sword so soon as his antagonist

e then no interest with you, sir," said Alice,  
g to address the King—"Do you not fear I  
se the secret in my power to prevent this affair  
to extremity? Think you this gentleman, who  
his hand against you, if he knew"—

f he knew that I were Lord Wilmot, madam, you  
ld say?—Accident has given him proof to that effect,  
n which he is already satisfied, and I think you would  
ad it difficult to induce him to embrace a different  
pinion."

Alice paused, and looked on the King with great indig-  
nation, the following words dropping from her mouth by  
intervals, as if they burst forth one by one in spite of feel-  
ings that would have restrained them—"Cold—selfish—  
ungrateful—unkind!—Woe to the land which"—Here  
she paused with marked emphasis, then added—"which  
shall number thee, or such as thee, among her nobles  
and rulers!"

"Nay, fair Alice," said Charles, whose good nature  
could not but feel the severity of this reproach, though  
too slightly to make all the desired impression, "you are  
too unjust to me—too partial to a happier man. Do not  
call me unkind; I am but here to answer Mr. Everard's  
summons. I could neither decline attending, nor with-  
draw now I am here, without loss of honour; and my  
loss of honour would be a disgrace which must extend to  
many—I cannot fly from Mr. Everard—it would be too  
shameful. If he abides by his message, it must be de-  
cided as such affairs usually are. If he retreats or yields  
it up, I will, for your sake, wave punctilio. I will not  
even ask an apology for the trouble it has afforded me.

F B



## WOODSTOCK.

er your question in the affirmative, it is  
er Kerneguy's safety comprehends more,  
than that of any of those you have  
"

! I did not know a coronet had been so  
a value to the crest of a private gentleman,"  
rard; "yet I have heard that many women  
"

u apprehend me amiss," said Alice, perplexed  
en the difficulty of so expressing herself as to pre-  
immediate mischief, and at the same time anxious  
ombat the jealousy and disarm the resentment which  
saw arising in the bosom of her lover. But she  
and no words fine enough to draw the distinction,  
without leading to a discovery of the King's actual cha-  
racter, and perhaps, in consequence, to his destruction.—  
"Markham," she said, "have compassion on me. Press  
me not at this moment; believe me, the honour and  
happiness of my father, of my brother, and of my whole  
family, are interested in Master Kerneguy's safety, are  
inextricably concerned in this matter resting where it  
now does."

"Oh, ay—I doubt not," said Everard; "the House  
of Lee ever looked up to nobility, and valued in their  
connections the fantastic loyalty of a courtier beyond the  
sterling and honest patriotism of a plain country gentle-  
man. For them, the thing is in course. But on your  
part, you, Alice—Oh! on your part, whom I have loved  
so dearly—who has suffered me to think that my affection  
was not unrepaid—Can the attractions of an empty title,  
the idle court compliments of a mere man of quality,  
during only a few hours, lead you to prefer a libertine  
lord to such a heart as mine?"

"No, no—believe me, no," said Alice, in the extremity  
of distress.

"Put your answer, which seems so painful, in '  
435 F F 2

*—sir, I presume to yield my interest in her t*

## WOODSTOCK.

"I never be the means of giving her pain, I will not think I act unworthily in retracting the I gave you the trouble of attending this place ar.—Alice," he said, turning his head towards rewell, Alice, at once, and for ever !"

poor young lady, whose adventitious spirit had deserted her, attempted to repeat the word fare-but failing in the attempt, only accomplished a en and imperfect sound, and would have sunk to the and, but for Dr. Rochecliffe, who caught her as she .. Roger Wildrake, also, who had twice or thrice put his eyes what remained of a kerchief, interested by the ady's evident distress, though unable to comprehend the mysterious cause, hastened to assist the divine in supporting so fair a burden.

Meanwhile, the disguised Prince had beheld the whole in silence, but with an agitation to which he was unwonted, and which his swarthy features, and still more his motions, began to betray. His posture was at first absolutely stationary, with his arms folded on his bosom, as one who waits to be guided by the current of events ; presently after, he shifted his position, advanced and retired his foot, clenched and opened his hand, and otherwise showed symptoms that he was strongly agitated by contending feelings—was on the point, too, of forming some sudden resolution, and yet still in uncertainty what course he should pursue.

But when he saw Markham Everard, after one look of unspeakable anguish towards Alice, turning his back to depart, he broke out into his familiar ejaculation, "Odds-fish ! this must not be." In three strides he overtook the slowly retiring Everard, tapped him smartly on the shoulder, and, as he turned round, said, with an air of command, which he well knew how to adopt at pleasure.

"One word with you, sir."

"At your pleasure, sir," replied Everard ; and natu-



## WOODSTOCK.

ly conjecturing the purpose of his antagonist to be  
stile, took hold of his rapier with the left hand, and  
d the right on the hilt, not displeased at the supposed  
l; for anger is at least as much akin to disappoint-  
ent as pity is said to be to love.

"Pshaw!" answered the King, "that cannot be *now*  
Colonel Everard, I am CHARLES STUART!"

Everard recoiled in the greatest surprise, and next ex-  
imed, "Impossible—it cannot be! The King of  
ots has escaped from Bristol.—My Lord Wilmot, your  
ents for intrigue are well known; but this will not pass  
on me."

"The King of Scots, Master Everard," replied  
arles, "since you are so pleased to limit his sove-  
gnty—at any rate, the Eldest Son of the late Sovereign  
Britain—is now before you; therefore it is impossible he  
uld have escaped from Bristol. Doctor Rochecliffe  
ll be my voucher, and will tell you, moreover, that  
l mot is of a fair complexion and light hair; mine,  
i may see, is swart as a raven."

Rochecliffe, seeing what was passing, abandoned Alice  
the care of Wildrake, whose extreme delicacy in the  
empts he made to bring her back to life, formed an  
iable contrast to his usual wildness, and occupied him  
much, that he remained for the moment ignorant of  
disclosure in which he would have been so much in-  
ested. As for Dr. Rochecliffe, he came forward,  
nging his hands in all the demonstration of extreme  
diety, and with the usual exclamations attending such  
tate.

"Peace, Doctor Rochecliffe!" said the King, with  
h complete self-possession as indeed became a prince;  
are in the hands, I am satisfied, of a man of honour.  
er Everard must be pleased in finding only a fugitive  
in the person in whom he thought he had dis-  
a successful rival. He cannot but be aware of

## WOODSTOCK.

which prevented me from taking advantage of which this young lady's devoted loyalty, at the risk of her own happiness. He is so ho is to profit by my candour ; and certainly right to expect that my condition, already in-enough, shall not be rendered worse by his be-privy to it under such circumstances. At any avowal is made ; and it is for Colonel Everard sider how he is to conduct himself."

"Oh, your Majesty ! my Liege ! my King ! my royal ce !" exclaimed Wildrake, who, at length discover-what was passing, had crawled on his knees, and ng the King's hand, was kissing it, more like a child biling gingerbread, or like a lover devouring the ed hand of his mistress, than in the manner in which salutations pass at court—" If my dear friend Mark ard should prove a dog on this occasion, rely on me l cut his throat on the spot, were I to do the same myself the moment afterwards ! "

"Hush, hush, my good friend and loyal subject," the King, " and compose yourself ; for though I am ed to put on the Prince for a moment, we have not cy or safety to receive our subjects in King Cam-s' vein."

erard, who had stood for a time utterly confounded, ce at length like a man from a dream.

"Sire," he said, bowing low, and with profound de-ice, " if I do not offer you the homage of a subject knee and sword, it is because God, by whom kings i, has denied you for the present the power of ading your throne without rekindling civil war. For safety being endangered by me, let not such an imagi-m for an instant cross your mind. Had I not oted your person—were I not bound to you for the ur with which your noble avowal has prevented it of my future life, your misfortunes would h

he to Woodstock, unless you, sire," bowing to the King  
"command his duty otherwise. Instant to the town  
Cousin Markham; and if danger should approach, give  
us warning."

Everard would have delayed her departure, would  
have excused himself for his unjust suspicion, would  
have said a thousand things; but she  
to him, saying, for all other answer,—"  
ham, till God send better days!"

...our good friend Wildrake to do  
," said Charles, smiling ; " such brains a  
nd should not be rashly dispersed, as the  
easily collected. We recommend him to  
udent—to tilt no more with loyal clergym  
e of England, and to get himself a ne  
l convenient speed, to which we beg to cc  
al aid. When fit time comes, we hope  
ervice for him."

e spoke, he slid ten pieces into the hand  
ke, who, confounded with the excess of h  
le, blubbered like a child, and would ha  
he King, had not Dr. Rochecliffe, in few  
mptory, insisted that he should return w  
promising him he should certainly be em  
ing the King's escape, could an opportu  
using his services.

so generous, reverend sir, and you bind  
ver," said the cavalier : " and I ---"  
---

he said, "with the purchase of my own life. M.  
—He stopped short, and the King took up his  
tence where it broke off—"More you cannot do,"  
Charles, "to maintain an honourable consistency—  
*what you have said is enough. You cannot render fe-  
age to my proffered hand as that of a sovereign, but  
will not prevent my taking yours as a friend—if you  
me to call myself so—I am sure, as a well-wisher at*  
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## WOODSTOCK.

grous soul of Everard was touched—He took hand, and pressed it to his lips.

he said, "were better times to come"—

"I will not give myself to nothing, dear Everard," said the matured Prince, partaking his emotion—"We will while our feelings are moved. I will recruit no to his loss; nor will I have my fallen fortunes in those of others, because they have humanity enough to pity my present condition. If better times come, why we will meet again, and I hope to our mutual satisfaction. If not, as your future father-in-law would say" (a benevolent smile came over his face, and accorded not unmeetly with his glistening eyes),—"If not, this parting was well made."

Everard turned away with a deep bow, almost choking under contending feelings; the uppermost of which was a sense of the generosity with which Charles, at his own imminent risk, had cleared away the darkness that seemed about to overwhelm his prospects of happiness for life—mixed with a deep sense of the perils by which he was environed. He returned to the little town, followed by his attendant Wildrake, who turned back so often, with weeping eyes, and hands clasped and uplifted as supplicating Heaven, that Everard was obliged to remind him that his gestures might be observed by some one, and occasion suspicion.

The generous conduct of the King during the closing part of this remarkable scene had not escaped Alice's notice; and, erasing at once from her mind all resentment of Charles's former conduct, and all the suspicions they had deservedly excited, awakened in her bosom a sense of the natural goodness of his disposition, which permitted her to unite regard for his person with that reverence for his high office in which she had been educated as a portion of her creed. She felt convinced, and delighted with the conviction, that his

*were inferior to him in activity.*  
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oe," said the King, but as if the epithet / fraternal, "I like your Everard much—I od he were of our determination—But since ot be, I am sure he will prove a generous

y it please you, sire," said Alice, modestly, but ome firmness, "my cousin will never be your ty's personal enemy—and he is one of the few on e slightest word you may rely more than on the oath ose who profess more strongly and formally. He is erly incapable of abusing your Majesty's most generous ad voluntary confidence."

"On my honour, I believe so, Alice," replied the King: "But, oddsfish! my girl, let Majesty sleep for the present—it concerns my safety, as I told your brother lately—Call me sir, then, which belongs alike to king, peer, knight, and gentleman—or rather, let me be wild Louis Kerneguy again."

Alice looked down, and shook her head. "That cannot be, please your Majesty."

"What! Louis was a saucy companion—a naughty presuming boy—and you cannot abide him?—Well, perhaps you are right—But we will wait for Doctor Rochcliffe"—he said, desirous, with good-natured delicacy, to make Alice aware that he had no purpose of engaging her in any discussion which could recall painful ideas. They paused accordingly, and again she felt relieved and grateful.

"I cannot persuade our fair friend, Mistress Alice, Doctor," said the King, "that she must, in prudence, forbear using titles of respect to me, while there are such very slender means of sustaining them."

"It is a reproach to earth and to fortune," answered *the divine*, as fast as his recovered breath would permit *him*, "that your most sacred Majesty's present condition should not accord with the rendering of those honours



years, till now they have come pat to my purpose? As my canny subjects of Scotland say, If you keep a thing seven years you are sure to find a use for it at last—*Telephus*—ay, so it begins—

*Telephus et Peleus, cum pauper et exul uterque,  
Projicit ampullas et sesquipedalia verba."*

"I will explain the passage to Mistress Alice," said the Doctor, "when she reminds me of it—or rather" (he added, recollecting that his ordinary dilatory answer on such occasions ought not to be returned when the order for exposition emanated from his Sovereign), "I will repeat a poor couplet from my own translation of the poem—

Heroes and kings, in exile forced to roam,  
Leave swelling phrase and seven-leagued words at home."

"A most admirable version, Doctor," said Charles; "I feel all its force, and particularly the beautiful rendering of *sesquipedalia verba* into seven-leagued boots

## WOODSTOCK.

that for once in my life I have acted

and the next were spent in tranquillity, the impatiently for the intelligence which was once to him that a vessel was prepared somewhere on the coast. None such was yet in readiness; he learned that the indefatigable Albert Lee was, at personal risk, traversing the sea-coast from town to town, and endeavouring to find means of embarkation for the friends of the royal cause, and the correspondents of Dr. Rochecliffe.

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## CHAP. XXIX.

*Ruffian, let go that rude uncivil touch !*

TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA.



It is time we should give some account of the other actors in our drama, the interest due to the principal personages having for some time engrossed our attention exclusively.

We are therefore to inform the reader that the lingering longings of the Commissioners, who had been driven forth of their proposed paradise of Woodstock, not by a cherub indeed, but, as they thought, by spirits of another sort, still detained them in the vicinity. They had, indeed, left the little borough under pretence of indifferent accommodation. The more palpable reasons were, that they entertained some resentment against Everard, as the means of their disappointment, and had no mind to reside where their proceedings could be overlooked by him, although they took leave in terms of the utmost respect. They went, however, no farther than Oxford, and remained there, as ravens, who are accustomed to witness the chase, sit upon a tree or crag at a little distance, and watch the disembowelling of the deer.

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expecting the relics which fall to their share. Mount the University and City, but especially the former, plied them with some means of employing their various faculties to advantage, until the expected moment, when as they hoped, they should either be summoned to Windsor, or Woodstock should once more be abandoned to their discretion.

Bletson, to pass the time, vexed the souls of learned and pious divines and scholars as he continually intrude his hateful presence upon, by sophistry, satirical discourse, and challenges to them to impugn most scandalous theses. Desborough, one of the most brutally ignorant men of the period, got himself nominated the head of a college, and lost no time in cutting down trees and plundering plate. As for Harrison preached in full uniform in Saint Mary's Church, with his buff-coat, boots, and spurs, as if he were about to take the field for the fight at Armageddon. And it is hard to say whether that seat of learning, Religion, Loyalty, as it is called by Clarendon, was more ruined by the rapine of Desborough, the cold scepticism of Bletson, or the frantic enthusiasm of the Fifth-Monarch Champion.

Ever and anon soldiers, under pretence of relieving the guard, or otherwise, went and came betwixt Woodstock and Oxford, and maintained, it may be supposed, a correspondence with Trusty Tomkins, who, though chiefly residing in the town of Woodstock, visited the Lodge occasionally, and to whom, therefore, they were less trusted for information concerning the proceedings there.

Indeed, this man Tomkins seemed by some means to have gained the confidence in part, if not the whole, of almost every one connected with the intrigues. All closeted him, all conversed with him in private; those who had the means propitiated him

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ose who had not were liberal of promises. he chanced to appear at Woodstock, which seemed as it were by accident—if he passed gh the hall, the knight was sure to ask him to take oils, and was equally certain to be, after less or e resistance, victorious in the encounter ; so, in con- eration of so many triumphs, the good Sir Henry most forgave him the sins of rebellion and puritanism. Then, if his slow and formal step was heard in the pas- ages approaching the gallery, Dr. Rochecliffe, though e never introduced him to his peculiar boudoir, was ure to meet Master Tomkins in some neutral apart- ment, and to engage him in long conversations, which pparently had great interest for both.

Neither was the Independent's reception below stairs ess gracious than above. Joceline failed not to welcome dm with the most cordial frankness ; the pasty and the lagon were put in immediate requisition, and good cheer was the general word. The means for this, it may be bserved, had grown more plenty at Woodstock since he arrival of Dr. Rochecliffe, who, in quality of agent or several royalists, had various sums of money at his lisposal. By these funds it is likely that Trusty Tom- ins also derived his own full advantage.

In his occasional indulgence in what he called a lesbly frailty (and for which he said he had a privilege), hich was in truth an attachment to strong liquors, and hat in no moderate degree, his language, at other imes remarkably decorous and reserved, became wild und animated. He sometimes talked, with all the unction of an old debauchee, of former exploits, such as leer-stealing, orchard-robbing, drunken gambols, and desperatè affrays in which he had been engaged in the *earlier part of his life*, sung bacchanalian and amorous *itties*, dwelt sometimes upon adventures which drov *oebe Mayflower* from the company, and penetra-

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even the deaf ears of Dame Jellicot, so as to make the buttery in which he held his carousals no proper place for the poor old woman.

In the middle of these wild rants, Tomkins twice or thrice suddenly ran into religious topics, and spoke mysteriously, but with great animation, and a rich eloquence, on the happy and pre-eminent saints, who were saints, as he termed them, indeed—Men who had stormed the inner treasure-house of Heaven, and possessed themselves of its choicest jewels. All other sects he treated with the utmost contempt, as merely quarrelling, as he expressed it, like hogs over a trough about husks and acorns; under which derogatory terms he included alike the usual rites and ceremonies of public devotion, the ordinances of the established churches of Christianity, and the observances, nay, the forbearances, enjoined by every class of Christians. Scarcely hearing, and not at all understanding him, Joceline, who seemed his most frequent confidant on such occasions, generally led him back into some strain of rude mirth, or old recollection of follies before the Civil Wars, without caring about endeavouring to analyse the opinion of this saint of a civil fashion, but fully sensible of the protection which his presence afforded at Woodstock, and confident of the honest meaning of so free-spoken a fellow, to whom ale and brandy, when better liquor was not to be got by, seemed to be principal objects of life, and who drank a health to the King or any one else, whenever required, provided the cup in which he was to perform the libation were but a brimmer.

These peculiar doctrines, which were entertained by *sect* sometimes termed the family of Love, but *commonly Ranters*,\* had made some progress in *when such variety* of religious opinions were prevalent *that men pushed the jarring heresies to the very absolute and most impious insanity.* Secrecy &

these frantic believers in a most blasphemous  
the fear of consequences, should they come  
ally announced ; and it was the care of  
to conceal the spiritual freedom which he  
to have acquired, from all whose resentment  
ve been stirred by his public avowal of it.  
is not difficult ; for their profession of faith per-  
nay required, their occasional conformity with  
staries or professors of any creed which chanced to  
r the time, uppermost.

Tomkins had accordingly the art to pass himself on  
Rochecliffe as still a zealous member of the Church  
England, though serving under the enemy's colours,  
is a spy in their camp ; and as he had on several occasions  
given him true and valuable intelligence, this active  
intriguer was the more easily induced to believe his  
professions.

Nevertheless, lest this person's occasional presence at  
the Lodge, which there were perhaps no means to pre-  
vent without exciting suspicion, should infer danger to  
the King's person, Rochecliffe, whatever confidence he  
otherwise reposed in him, recommended that, if possible,  
the King should keep always out of his sight, and when  
accidentally discovered, that he should only appear in  
the character of Louis Kerneguy. Joseph Tomkins, he  
said, was, he really believed, Honest Joe ; but Honesty  
was a horse which might be overburdened, and there  
was no use in leading our neighbour into temptation.

It seemed as if Tomkins himself had acquiesced in  
this limitation of confidence exercised towards him, or  
that he wished to seem blinder than he really was to the  
presence of this stranger in the family. It occurred to  
Joceline, who was a very shrewd fellow, that once or  
twice, when by inevitable accident Tomkins had met  
Kerneguy, he seemed less interested in the circum-  
stance than he would have expected from the man's dis-

or at the Lodge, and that even Joceline Joliffe was anxious to conceal any suspicions which he could not altogether repress, under a great show of cordial hospitality. There were, however, two individuals, who, for very different reasons, nourished personal dislike against *individual so generally acceptable.*

One was Nehemiah Holdenough, who remembered with great bitterness of spirit, the Independent's intrusion into his pulpit, and who ever spoke of

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ying missionary, into whom Satan had put delusion ; and preached, besides, a solemn the subject of the false prophet, out of whose ne frogs. The discourse was highly prized by or and most of the better class, who conceived ar minister had struck a heavy blow at the very Independency. On the other hand, those of the e spirit contended, that Joseph Tomkins had made cessful and triumphant rally, in an exhortation on evening of the same day, in which he proved, to the viction of many handicraftsmen, that the passage in remiah, "The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means," was directly applicable to the Presbyterian system of church government. The clergyman despatched an account of his adversary's conduct to the Reverend Master Edwards, to be inserted in the next edition of Gangræna, as a pestilent heretic ; and Tomkins recommended the parson to his master, Desborough, as a good subject on whom to impose a round fine, for vexing the private spirit ; assuring him at the same time, that though the minister might seem poor, yet if a few troopers were quartered on him till the fine was paid, every rich shopkeeper's wife in the borough would rob the till, rather than go without the mammon of unrighteousness with which to redeem their priest from sufferance ; holding, according to his expression, with Laban, " You have taken from me my gods, and what have I more ? " There was, of course, little cordiality between the polemical disputants, when religious debate took so worldly a turn.

But Joe Tomkins was much more concerned at the evil opinion which seemed to be entertained against him, by one whose good graces he was greatly *in* *desirous* to obtain than those of Nehemiah Holdens. This was no other than pretty Mistress Phœbe flower, for whose conversion he had felt a strong







genuity of the obliging engineer, and perhaps in thinking he might have done as wisely to have waited till she came to the fountain that he might have secured personal thanks for the trouble he had taken. But then she knew he was detained in the buttery with that odious Tomkins, and rather than have seen the Independent along with him, she would have renounced the thought of meeting Joceline.

As she was thus reflecting, Fortune was malicious enough to send Tomkins to the fountain, and without Joceline. When she saw his figure darken the path up which he came, an anxious reflection came over the poor maiden's breast, that she was alone, and within the verge of the forest, where in general persons were prohibited to come during the twilight, for disturbing the deer settling to their repose. She encouraged, herself, however, and resolved to show no sense of fear although, as the steward approached, there was something in the man's look and eye no way calculated to

I warrant, drank better liquor, and that

eed, obvious that the steward had arisen  
 I, for his features were somewhat flushed,  
 had stopped far short of intoxication. But  
 alarm at his first appearance was rather in-  
 when she observed how he had been lately  
 oyed.

I do but use my privilege, my pretty Rebecca ; the  
 h is given to the saints, and the fulness thereof.  
 ey shall occupy and enjoy it, both the riches of the  
 ine, and the treasures of the vine ; and they shall  
 rejoice, and their hearts be merry within them. Thou hast  
 yet to learn the privileges of the saints, my Rebecca."

"My name is Phoebe," said the maiden, in order to  
 sober the enthusiastic rapture which he either felt or  
 affected.

"Phoebe after the flesh," he said, "but Rebecca being  
 spiritualised ; for art thou not a wandering and stray  
 sheep?—and am I not sent to fetch thee within the fold?  
 —Wherefore else was it said, Thou shalt find her seated  
 by the well, in the wood which is called after the ancient  
 harlot, Rosamond?"

"You have found me sitting here sure enough," said  
 Phoebe ; "but if you wish to keep me company, you  
 must walk to the Lodge with me ; and you shall carry  
 my pitcher for me, if you will be so kind. I will hear  
 all the good things you have to say to me as we go  
 along. But Sir Henry calls for his glass of water regu-  
 larly before prayers."

"What !" exclaimed Tomkins, "hath the old man  
 of bloody hand and perverse heart sent thee hither to  
 do the work of a bondswoman? Verily thou shalt  
 return enfranchised ; and for the water thou has drawn  
 for him, it shall be poured forth, even as David caused  
 to be poured forth the water of the well of Bethlehem."

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So saying, he emptied the water pitcher, in spite of Phoebe's exclamations and entreaties. He then replaced the vessel beneath the little conduit, and continued :—  
" Know that this shall be a token to thee. The filling of that pitcher shall be like the running of a sand-glass ; and if within the time which shall pass ere it rises to the brim, thou shalt listen to the words which I shall say to thee, then it shall be well with thee, and thy place shall be high among those who, forsaking the instruction which is as milk for babes and sucklings, eat the strong food which nourishes manhood. But if the pitcher shall overbrim with water ere thy ear shall hear and understand, thou shalt then be given as a prey, and as a bondsmaiden, unto those who shall possess the fat and the fair of the earth."

" You frighten me, Master Tomkins," said Phoebe, " though I am sure you do not mean to do so. I wonder how you dare speak words so like the good words in the Bible, when you know how you laughed at your own master, and all the rest of them—when you helped to play the hobgoblins at the Lodge."

" Think'st thou then, thou simple fool, that in putting that deceit upon Harrison and the rest, I exceeded my privileges?—Nay, verily. Listen to me, foolish girl. When in former days I lived the most wild, malignant rakehell in Oxfordshire, frequenting wakes and fairs, dancing around Maypoles, and showing my lustihood at football and cudgel-playing—Yea, when I was called, in the language of the uncircumcised, Philip Hazeldine, and was one of the singers in the choir, and one of the *ringers* in the steeple, and served the priest yonder, by name Rochecliffe, I was not farther from the straight road than when, after long reading, I at length found one blind guide after another, all burners of bricks in Egypt. I left them one by one, the poor tool Harrison being the last ; and by my own unassisted strength,

led forward to the broad and blessed light,  
 ou too, Phœbe, shalt be partaker."

ask you, Master Tomkins," said Phœbe, sup-  
 some fear under an appearance of indifference ;  
 shall have light enough to carry home my pitcher,  
 you but let me take it ; and that is all the want of  
 I shall have this evening."

saying, she stooped to take the pitcher from the  
 attain ; but he snatched hold of her by the arm, and  
 prevented her from accomplishing her purpose. Phœbe,  
 however, was the daughter of a bold forester, prompt  
 at thoughts of self-defence ; and though she missed  
 getting hold of the pitcher, she caught up instead a  
 large pebble, which she kept concealed in her right  
 hand.

"Stand up, foolish maiden, and listen," said the In-  
 dependent, sternly ; "and know, in one word, that sin,  
 for which the spirit of man is punished with the ven-  
 geance of Heaven, lieth not in the corporal act, but in  
 the thought of the sinner. Believe, lovely Phœbe, that  
 to the pure all acts are pure, and that sin is in our  
 thought, not in our actions—even as the radiance of the  
 day is dark to a blind man, but seen and enjoyed by him  
 whose eyes receive it. To him who is but a novice in the  
 things of the spirit, much is enjoined, much is prohibited ;  
 and he is fed with milk fit for babes,—for him are ordi-  
 nances, prohibitions, and commands. But the saint is  
 above these ordinances and restraints.—To him, as to  
 the chosen child of the house, is given the pass-key to  
 open all locks which withhold him from the enjoyment  
 of his heart's desire. Into such pleasant paths will I  
 guide thee, lovely Phœbe, as shall unite in joy, in inno-  
 cent freedom, pleasures, which to the unprivileged are  
*sinful and prohibited.*"

"I really wish, Master Tomkins, you would let me go  
 home," said Phœbe, not comprehending the nature of

expression, and he exclaimed, "No, Phoebe—do not  
think to escape—thou art given to me as a captive—I  
have neglected the hour of grace, and it has glided

water trickles over thy pitcher, which was to  
between us—Therefore I will urge thee no more  
as, of which thou are not worthy, but treat thee  
as a sinner of offered grace."

ster Tomkins," said Phœbe, in an imploring tone,  
sider, for God's sake, I am a fatherless child—do  
no injury, it would be a shame to your strength and  
manhood—I cannot understand your fine words—I  
think on them till to-morrow." Then, in rising re-  
pentment, she added more vehemently—"I will not be  
treated rudely—stand off, or I will do you a mischief."  
But, as he pressed upon her with a violence, of which the  
object could not be mistaken, and endeavoured to secure  
her right hand, she exclaimed, "Take it then, with a  
banion to you!"—and struck him an almost stunning  
blow on the face, with the pebble which she held ready  
for such an extremity.

The fanatic let her go, and staggered backward, half  
stupified ; while Phœbe instantly betook herself to flight,  
screaming for help as she ran, but still grasping the vic-  
torious pebble. Irritated to frenzy by the severe blow  
which he had received, Tomkins pursued, with every  
black passion in his soul, and in his face, mingled with  
fear lest his villany should be discovered. He called on  
Phœbe loudly to stop, and had the brutality to menace  
her with one of his pistols if she continued to fly. Yet  
she slackened not her pace for his threats, and he must  
either have executed them, or seen her escape to carry  
the tale to the Lodge, had she not unhappily stumbled  
over the projecting root of a fir tree. But as he rushed  
upon his prey, rescue interposed in the person of Joceline  
Joliffe, with his quarterstaff on his shoulder. "How  
now? what means this?" he said, stepping between  
Phœbe and her pursuer. Tomkins, already roused to  
fury, made no other answer than by discharging at  
Joceline the pistol which he held in his hand. The ball



seems to have proved worse devil than ever."

"Oh, Joceline, come away," said poor Phoebe, "and do not stand gazing on him thus;" for the woodsman, resting on his fatal weapon, stood looking down on the corpse with the appearance of a man half stunned at the event.

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is comes of the ale-pitcher," she continued, in the style of female consolation, "as I have often told—For Heaven's sake, come to the Lodge, and let us consult what is to be done."

"Stay, first, girl, and let me drag him out of the path; we must not have him lie here in all men's sight—Will you not help me, wench?"

"I cannot, Joceline—I would not touch a lock on him in all Woodstock."

"I must to this gear myself, then," said Joceline, so, a soldier as well as a woodman, still had great resistance to the necessary task. Something in the faded broken words of the dying man had made a deep and terrific impression on nerves not easily shaken. He accomplished it, however, so far as to drag the steward out of the open path, and bestow his body amongst the undergrowth of brambles and briers, so not to be visible unless particularly looked after. He then returned to Phoebe, who had sat speechless the while beneath the tree over whose roots she had stumbled.

"Come away, wench," he said, "come away to the lodge, and let us study how this is to be answered for—the mishap of his being killed will strangely increase our anger. What had he sought of thee, wench, when you ran from him like a mad-woman?—But I can guess—evil was always a devil among the girls, and, I think, as doctor Rochecliffe says, that since he turned saint, he took to himself seven devils worse than himself.—Here is a very place where I saw him, with his sword in his hand raised against the old knight, and he a child of the parish—it was high treason at least—but, by my faith, he hath paid for it at last."

"But, oh, Joceline," said Phoebe, "how could you take wicked a man into your counsels, and join him in plots about scaring the roundhead gentlemen?"

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"Why, look thee, wench, I thought I knew him at the first meeting, especially when Bevis, who was bred here when he was a dog-leader, would not fly at him; and when we made up our old acquaintance at the Lodge, I found he kept up a close correspondence with Doctor Rochecliffe, who was persuaded that he was a good King's man, and held consequently good intelligence with him.—The Doctor boasts to have learned much through his means; I wish to Heaven he may not have been as communicative in turn."

"Oh, Joceline," said the waiting-woman, "you should never have let him within the gate of the Lodge!"

"No more I would, if I had known how to keep him out: but when he went so frankly into our scheme, and told me how I was to dress myself like Robinson the player, whose ghost haunted Harrison—I wish no ghost may haunt me!—when he taught me how to bear myself to terrify his lawful master, what could I think, wench? I only trust the Doctor has kept the great secret of all from his knowledge.—But here we are at the Lodge. Go to thy chamber, wench, and compose thyself. I must seek out Doctor Rochecliffe; he is ever talking of his quick and ready invention. Here come times, I think, that will demand it all."

Phoebe went to her chamber accordingly; but the strength arising from the pressure of danger giving way when the danger was removed, she quickly fell into a succession of hysterical fits, which required the constant attention of Dame Jellicot, and the less alarmed, but more judicious care of Mistress Alice, before they even abated in their rapid recurrence.

The under-keeper carried his news to the politic Doctor, who was extremely disconcerted, alarmed, nay angry with Joceline, for having slain a person on whose communications he had accustomed himself to rely. Yet his looks declared his suspicion, whether his confidence

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ot been too rashly conferred—a suspicion which d him the more anxiously, that he was unwilling to it, as a derogation from his character for shrewd-  
m which he valued himself.

Rochecliffe's reliance, however, on the fidelity of ins, had apparently good grounds. Before the Wars, as may be partly collected from what has already hinted at, Tomkins, under his true name of dine, had been under the protection of the Rector odstock, occasionally acted as his clerk, was a dis- shed member of his choir, and, being a handy and ous fellow, was employed in assisting the anti- n researches of Dr. Rochecliffe through the interior odstock. When he engaged in the opposite side Civil Wars, he still kept up his intelligence with vine, to whom he had afforded what seemed valu- iformation from time to time. His assistance had y been eminently useful in aiding the Doctor, with sistance of Joceline and Phoebe, in contriving and ing the various devices by which the Parliamentary issioners had been expelled from Woodstock. In- his services in this respect had been thought worthy less a reward than a present of what plate remained Lodge, which had been promised to the Indepen- ccordingly. The Doctor, therefore, while admitting ght be a bad man, regretted him as a useful one, death, if inquired after, was likely to bring addi- danger on a house which danger already surrounded, hich contained a pledge so precious.

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### CHAP. XXX.

CASSIO.—*That thrust had been my enemy indeed,  
But that my coat is better than thou know'st.*

OTHELLO.



IN the dark October night succeeding the evening on which Tomkins was slain, Colonel Everard, besides his constant attendant Roger Wildrake, had Master Nehemiah Holdenough with him as a guest at supper. The devotions of the evening having been performed according to the Presbyterian fashion, a light entertainment and a double quart of burnt claret were placed before his friends at nine o'clock, an hour unusually late. Master Holdenough soon engaged himself in a polemical discourse against Sectaries and Independents, without being aware that his eloquence was not very interesting to his principal hearer, whose ideas in the meanwhile wandered to Woodstock and all which it contained—the Prince, who lay concealed there—his uncle—above all, Alice Lee. As for Wildrake, after bestowing a mental curse both on Sectaries and Presbyterians, as being, in his opinion, never a barrel the better herring, he stretched out his limbs, and would probably have composed himself to rest, but that he as well as his patron had thoughts which murdered sleep.

The party were waited upon by a little gipsy-looking boy, in an orange-tawny doublet, much decayed, and garnished with blue worsted lace. The rogue looked somewhat stunted in size, but active both in intelligence and in limb, as his black eyes seemed to promise by their vivacity. He was an attendant of Wildrake's choice, who had conferred on him the *nom de guerre* of Spitfire, and had promised him promotion so soon as his young protégé, Breakfast, was fit to succeed him in his present office. It need scarce be said that the menage was main-

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entirely at the expense of Colonel Everard, who had Wildrake to arrange the household very much according to his pleasure. The page did not omit, in giving the company wine from time to time, to accommodate Wildrake with about twice the number of opportunities of refreshing himself which he considered it necessary to afford to the Colonel or his reverend guest.

While they were thus engaged, the good divine lost in his own argument, and the hearers in their private thoughts, their attention was about half-past ten arrested by a knocking at the door of the house. To those who have anxious hearts, trifles give cause of alarm.

Even a thing so simple as a knock at the door may have a character which excites apprehension. This was no quiet gentle tap, intimating a modest intruder ; no redoubled rattle, as the pompous annunciation of some vain person ; neither did it resemble the formal summons to formal business, nor the cheerful visit of some welcome friend. It was a single blow, solemn and stern, if not actually menacing in the sound. The door was opened by some of the persons of the house ; a heavy foot ascended the stair, a stout man entered the room, and drawing the cloak from his face, said, "Markham Everard, I greet thee in God's name."

It was General Cromwell.

Everard, surprised and taken at unawares, endeavoured in vain to find words to express his astonishment. A bustle occurred in receiving the General, assisting him to uncloak himself, and offering in dumb show the civilities of reception. The General cast his keen eye around the apartment, and fixing it first on the divine, addressed Everard as follows :

"A reverend man I see is with thee. Thou art not one of those, good Markham, who let the time unnoted and unimproved pass away. Casting aside the things of this world—pressing forward to those of the next—"

H H 2

be ready, in our various degrees, to act and do so soon as we are called to act that whereunto we are appointed, neither rashly nor over-slothfully, neither lukewarmly nor over-violently, but with such a frame and disposition in which zeal and charity may, as it were, meet and kiss each other in our streets. Howbeit, because we look back after we have put our hand to the plough, therefore is our force waxed dim."

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"Pardon me, sir," said Nehemiah Holdenough, who, listening with some impatience, began to guess in whose company he stood—"Pardon me, for unto this I have a warrant to speak."

"Ah! ah!" said Cromwell. "Surely, most worthy sir, we grieve the Spirit when we restrain those pourings forth, which, like water from a rock"—

"Nay, therein I differ from you, sir," said Holdenough; "for as there is the mouth to transmit the food, and the profit to digest what Heaven hath sent; so is the preacher ordained to teach and the people to hear; the shepherd to gather the flock into the sheep-fold, the sheep to profit by the care of the shepherd."

"Ah! my worthy sir," said Cromwell with much unction, "methinks you verge upon the great mistake, which supposes that churches are tall large houses built by masons, and hearers are men—wealthy men, who pay tithes, the larger as well as the less; and that the priests, men in black gowns or grey cloaks, who receive the same, are in guerdon the only distributors of Christian blessings; whereas, in my apprehension, there is more of Christian liberty in leaving it to the discretion of the hungry soul to seek his edification where it can be found, whether from the mouth of a lay teacher, who claimeth his warrant from Heaven alone, or at the dispensation of those who take ordination and degrees from synods and universities, at best but associations of poor sinful creatures like themselves."

"You speak you know not what, sir," replied Holdenough impatiently. "Can light come out of darkness, sense out of ignorance, or knowledge of the mysteries of religion from such ignorant mediciners as give poisons instead of wholesome medicaments, and cram with filth the stomachs of such as seek to them for food?" This, which the Presbyterian divine uttered rather warmly, the General answered with the utmost mildness.



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"Lack-a-day, lack-a-day! a learned man, but intemperate; over-zeal hath eaten him up.—A-well-a-day, sir, you may talk of your regular gospel-meals, but a word spoken in season by one whose heart is with your heart, just, perhaps, when you are riding on to encounter an enemy, or are about to mount a breach, is to the poor spirit like a rasher on the coals, which the hungry shall find preferable to a great banquet, at such times when the full soul loatheth the honey-comb. Nevertheless, although I speak thus in my poor judgment, I would not put force on the conscience of any man, leaving to the learned to follow the learned, and the wise to be instructed by the wise, while poor simple wretched souls are not to be denied a drink from the stream which runneth by the way.—Ay, verily, it will be a comely sight in England when men shall go on as in a better world, bearing with each other's infirmities, joining in each other's comforts—Ay, truly, the rich drink out of silver flagons, and goblets of silver, the poor out of paltry bowls of wood—and even so let it be, since they both drink the same element."

Here an officer opened the door and looked in, whom Cromwell, exchanging the canting drawl, in which it seemed he might have gone on interminably, for a short brief tone of action, called out, "Pearson, is come?"

"No, sir," replied Pearson; "we have inquired him at the place you noted, and also at other ha of his about the town."

"The knave!" said Cromwell, with bitter emphasis, "can he have proved false!—No, no, his interest deeply engaged. We shall find him by and by.—*thee hither.*"

*While this conversation was going forward, the must imagine the alarm of Everard. He was that the personal attendance of Cromwell must*

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account, and he could not but strongly  
the General had some information respect-  
lurking-place. If taken, a renewal of the  
the 30th of January was instantly to be ap-  
and the ruin of the whole family of Lee,  
self probably included, must be the necessary  
ice.

asked eagerly for consolation at Wildrake, whose  
ance expressed much alarm, which he endea-  
to bear out with his usual look of confidence.  
t the weight within was too great ; he shuffled with  
s feet, rolled his eyes, and twisted his hands, like an  
unassured witness before an acute and not to be de-  
ceived judge.

Oliver, meanwhile, left his company not a minute's  
leisure to take counsel together. Even while his per-  
plexed eloquence flowed on in a stream so mazy that  
no one could discover which way its course was tending,  
his sharp watchful eye rendered all attempts of Everard  
to hold communication with Wildrake, even by signs,  
altogether vain. Everard, indeed, looked for an instant  
at the window, then glanced at Wildrake, as if to hint  
there might be a possibility to escape that way. But  
the cavalier had replied with a disconsolate shake of  
the head, so slight as to be almost imperceptible,  
Everard, therefore, lost all hope, and the melancholy  
feeling of approaching and inevitable evil, was only  
varied by anxiety concerning the shape and manner in  
which it was about to make its approach.

But Wildrake had a spark of hope left. The very  
instant Cromwell entered he had got out of the room,  
and down to the door of the house. "Back—back!"  
repeated by two armed sentinels, convinced him that, as  
*his fears* had anticipated, the General had come neither  
unattended nor unprepared. He turned on his h  
ran up stairs, and meeting on the landing-place

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as it  
been prompt  
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...introduce a discourse more  
his real feelings, interrupted him, and  
and took the discourse into his own ha-  
sh-a-day," he said, "the good man sp-  
ing to his knowledge and to his lights,-  
and hard to be digested, while we see a  
t with the eyes of angels.—False messen-  
erend man?—ay, truly, the world is full  
all see them who will carry your secret  
house of your mortal foe, and will say  
my master is going forth with a small  
and such desolate places; be you speedy  
at you may arise and slay him.' And  
weth where the foe of your house, and ei-  
son, lies hidden, shall, instead of tell-  
ereof, carry tidings to the enemy even w-  
aying, 'Lo! my master knoweth of you  
o, now, and fly, lest he come on thee lik-  
y.'—But shall this so with

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matter is estranged from our present purpose, for the false brethren of whom I spoke are "——

"Right, excellent sir, they be those of our own house," answered Cromwell; "the good man is right once more. Ay, of whom can we now say that he is a true brother, although he has lain in the same womb with us? Although we have struggled in the same cause, ate at the same table, fought in the same battle, worshipped at the same throne, there shall be no truth in him.—Ah, Markham Everard, Markham Everard!"

He paused at this ejaculation; and Everard, desirous at once of knowing how far he stood committed, replied, "Your Excellency seems to have something in your mind in which I am concerned. May I request you will speak it out, that I may know what I am accused of?"

"Ah, Mark, Mark," replied the General, "there needeth no accuser speak when the still small voice speaks within us. Is there not moisture on thy brow, Mark Everard? Is there not trouble in thine eye? Is there not a failure in thy frame? And who ever saw such things in noble and stout Markham Everard, whose brow was only moist after having worn the helmet for a summer's day; whose hand only shook when it had wielded for hours the weighty falchion?—But go to, man! thou doubttest over much. Hast thou not been to me as a brother, and shall I not forgive thee even the seventy-seventh time? The knave hath tarried somewhere, who should have done by this time an office of much import. Take advantage of his absence, Mark; it is a grace that God gives thee beyond expectance. I do not say, fall at my feet; but speak to me as a friend to his friend."

"I have never said anything to your Excellency that was in the least undeserving the title you have assigned me," said Colonel Everard, proudly.

"Nay, nay, Markham," answered Cromwell; "I say

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u have. But—but you ought to have remembered the message I sent you by that person" (pointing to Wildrake) ; "and you must reconcile it with your conscience, how, having such a message, guarded with such reasons, you could think yourself at liberty to expel my hands from Woodstock, being determined to disappoint my object, whilst you availed yourself of the boon, on addition of which my warrant was issued."

Everard was about to reply, when, to his astonishment, Wildrake stepped forward ; and with a voice and look very different from his ordinary manner, and approaching a good deal to real dignity of mind, said, boldly and calmly, "You are mistaken, Master Cromwell ; and address yourself to the wrong party here."

The speech was so sudden and intrepid that Cromwell stepped a pace back, and motioned with his right hand towards his weapon, as if he had expected that an address of a nature so unusually bold was to be followed by some act of violence. He instantly resumed his indifferent posture ; and, irritated at a smile which he observed on Wildrake's countenance, he said, with the dignity of one long accustomed to see all tremble before him, "This to me, fellow ! Know you to whom you speak ?"

"Fellow !" echoed Wildrake, whose reckless humour was now completely set afloat—"No fellow of yours, Master Oliver. I have known the day when Roger Wildrake of Squattlesea-mere, Lincoln, a handsome young gallant, with a good estate, would have been thought no fellow of the bankrupt brewer of Huntingdon."

"Be silent !" said Everard ; "be silent, Wildrake, if you love your life !"

"I care not a maravedi for my life," said Wildrake. "Zounds, if he dislikes what I say, let him take to his tools ! I know, after all, he hath good blood in his

... I treat ...  
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that

So ho ! Pearson !  
—Thou art a lying  
whence ?"  
Wildrake ; "for look  
ace is certain—but he

some useful  
cavalier, upon  
taken.  
I said before, wh  
may e'en find  
words he unsheath  
t the General's br

at a learned divine of the Church of England."

In the first instant of alarm, and perhaps suspecting Wildrake might be supported by others, Cromwell half drew from his bosom a concealed pistol, which he hastily returned, observing that both Everard and the clergyman were withholding the cavalier from another attempt.

Pearson and a soldier or two rushed in—"Secure that fellow," said the General, in the indifferent tone of one to whom imminent danger was too familiar to cause irritation—"Bind him—but not so hard, Pearson;"—for the men, to show their zeal, were drawing their belts, which they used for want of cords, brutally tight round Wildrake's limbs. "He would have assassinated me, but I would reserve him for his fit doom."

"Assassinated!—I scorn your words, Master Oliver," said Wildrake; "I proffered you a fair duello."

"Shall we shoot him in the street, for an example?" said Pearson to Cromwell; while Everard endeavoured to stop Wildrake from giving further offence.

"On your life harm him not; but let him be kept in safe ward, and well looked after," said Cromwell; while the prisoner exclaimed to Everard, "I prithee let v



## WOODSTOCK.

alone—I am now neither thy follower, nor any man's; and I am as willing to die as ever I was to take a cup of liquor.—And hark ye, speaking of that, Master Oliver, you were once a jolly fellow, prithee let one of thy lobsters here advance yonder tankard to my lips, and your Excellency shall hear a toast, a song, and a secret."

"Unloose his head, and hand the debauched beast the tankard," said Oliver; "while yet he exists, it were shame to refuse him the element he lives in."

"Blessings on your head for once," said Wildrake, whose object in continuing this wild discourse was, if possible, to gain a little delay, when every moment was precious. "Thou hast brewed good ale, and that's warrant for a blessing. For my toast and my song, here they go together—

Son of a witch,  
Mayest thou die in a ditch,  
With the butchers who back thy quarrels;  
And rot above ground,  
While the world shall resound  
A welcome to Royal King Charles!

And now for my secret, that you may not say I had your liquor for nothing—I fancy my song will scarce pass current for much—My secret is, Master Cromwell—that the bird is flown—and your red nose will be as white as your winding-sheet before you can smell out which way."

"Pshaw, rascal," answered Cromwell, contemptuously, "keep your scurril jests for the gibbet foot."

"I shall look on the gibbet more boldly," replied Wildrake, "than I have seen you look on the Royal Martyr's picture."

*This reproach touched Cromwell to the very quick.—*  
*'Villain!' he exclaimed; "drag him hence, draw out party, and——But hold, not now—to prison with him*

e close watched and, gagged, if he attempts to the sentinels—Nay, hold—I mean, put a brandy into his cell, and he will gag himself in way, I warrant you—When day comes, that n see the example, he shall be gagged after my l."

ring the various breaks in his orders, the General evidently getting command of his temper; and ough he began in fury, he ended with the contemptuous sneer of one who overlooks the abusive language f an inferior. Something remained on his mind, notwithstanding, for he continued stationary, as if fixed to the same spot in the apartment, his eyes bent on the ground, and with closed hand pressed against his lips, like a man who is musing deeply. Pearson, who was about to speak to him, drew back, and made a sign to those in the room to be silent.

Master Holdenough did not mark, or, at least, did not obey it. Approaching the General, he said, in a respectful but firm tone, "Did I understand it to be your Excellency's purpose that this poor man shall die next morning?"

"Hah!" exclaimed Cromwell, starting from his reverie, "what say'st thou?"

"I took leave to ask, if it was your will that this unhappy man should die to-morrow?"

"Whom saidst thou?" demanded Cromwell: "Markham Everard—shall he die, saidst thou?"

"God forbid!" replied Holdenough, stepping back—"I asked whether this blinded creature, Wildrake, was to be so suddenly cut off?"

"Ay, marry is he," said Cromwell, "were the whole General Assembly of Divines at Westminster—the whole Sanhedrim of Presbytery—to offer bail for him."

"If you will not think better of it, sir," said Hol-

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enough, "at least give not the poor man the means of destroying his senses—Let me go to him as a divine, to watch with him, in case he may yet be admitted into the vineyard at the latest hour—yet brought into the sheep-fold, though he has neglected the call of the pastor till time is well-nigh closed upon him."

"For God's sake," said Everard, who had hitherto kept silence, because he knew Cromwell's temper on such occasions, "think better of what you do!"

"Is it for thee to teach me?" replied Cromwell; "think thou of thine own matters, and believe me it will require all thy wit.—And for you, reverend sir, I will have no father-confessors attend my prisoners—no tales out of school. If the fellow thirsts after ghostly comfort, as he is much more like to thirst after a quartern of brandy, there is Corporal Humgudgeon, who commands the *corps de garde*, will preach and pray as well as the best of ye.—But this delay is intolerable—Comes not this fellow yet?"

"No, sir," replied Pearson. "Had we not better go down to the Lodge? The news of our coming hither may else get there before us."

"True," said Cromwell, speaking aside to his officer, "but you know Tomkins warned us against doing so, alleging there were so many postern-doors, and sally-ports, and concealed entrances in the old house, that it was like a rabbit-warren, and that an escape might be easily made under our very noses, unless he were with us, to point out all the ports which should be guarded. He hinted, too, that he might be delayed a few minutes after his time of appointment—but we have now waited half-an-hour."

"Does your Excellency think Tomkins is certainly to be depended upon?" said Pearson.

"As far as his interest goes, unquestionably," replied the General. "He has ever been the pump by which I

## WOODSTOCK.

have sucked the marrow out of many a plot, in special those of the conceited fool Rochecliffe, who is goose enough to believe that such a fellow as Tomkins would value anything beyond the offer of the best bidder. And yet it groweth late—I fear we must to the Lodge without him—Yet, all things well considered, I will tarry here till midnight.—Ah! Everard, thou mightest put this gear to rights if thou wilt! Shall some foolish principle of fantastic punctilio have more weight with thee, man, than have the pacification and welfare of England; the keeping of faith to thy friend and benefactor, and who will be yet more so, and the fortune and security of thy relations? Are these, I say, lighter in the balance than the cause of a worthless boy, who, with his father and his father's house, have troubled Israel for fifty years?"

"I do not understand your Excellency, nor at what service you point, which I can honestly render," replied Everard. "That which is dishonest I should be loath that you proposed."

"Then this at least might suit your honesty, or scrupulous humour, call it which thou wilt," said Cromwell. "Thou knowest, surely, all the passages about Jezebel's palace down yonder?—Let me know how they may be guarded against the escape of any from within."

"I cannot pretend to aid you in this matter," said Everard; "I know not all the entrances and posterns about Woodstock, and if I did, I am not free in conscience to communicate with you on this occasion."

"We shall do without you, sir," replied Cromwell, haughtily; "and if aught is found which may criminate you, remember you have lost right to my protection."

"I shall be sorry," said Everard, "to have lost your friendship, General; but I trust my quality as Englishman may dispense with the necessity of pro-

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an. I know no law which obliges me  
former, even if I were in the way of  
ity to do service in either honourable

said Cromwell, "for all your privileges  
. will make bold to take you down to the  
odstock to-night, to inquire into affairs in  
te is concerned.—Come hither, Pearson."  
aper from his pocket, containing a rough  
und-plan of Woodstock Lodge, with the  
ing to it.—"Look here," he said; "we  
1 two bodies on foot, and with all possible  
1 must march to the rear of the old house of  
h twenty file of men, and dispose them  
he wisest thou canst. Take the reverend  
along with you. He must be secured at any  
nay serve as a guide. I myself will occupy  
the Lodge, and thus having stopped all the  
1 wilt come to me for farther orders—silence  
ch is all.—But for the dog Tomkins, who  
intment with me, he had need render a good  
woe to his father's son!—Reverend sir, be  
accompany that officer.—Colonel Everard,  
follow me; but first give your sword to  
Pearson, and consider yourself as under

gave his sword to Pearson without any com-  
with the most anxious presage of evil followed  
lican General, in obedience to commands  
ould have been useless to dispute.

## WOODSTOCK.

### CHAP. XXXI.

*"Were my son William here but now,  
He wadna fail the pledge."  
Wi' that in at the door there ran  
A ghastly-looking page —  
I saw them master, oh! I saw,  
Beneath the thornie brac,  
Of black-mail'd warriors many a rank.  
'Revenge!' he cried, 'and gae.'"*

HENRY MACKEN

**T**HE little party at the Lodge were assembled for supper, at the early hour of eight o'clock. Henry Lee, neglecting the food that was on the table, stood by a lamp on the chimney-piece and read a letter with mournful attention.

"Does my son write to you more particularly than to me, Doctor Rochecliffe?" said the knight. "He says here, that he will return probably this night; that Master Kerneguy must be ready to set off with him instantly. What can this haste mean? Have you heard of any new search after our suffering party? If they would permit me to enjoy my son's company for a quiet but for a day."

"The quiet which depends on the wicked season is troubling," said Dr. Rochecliffe, "is connected by days and hours, but by minutes. Their good food at Worcester had satiated them for a moment; their appetite, I fancy, has revived."

"You have news, then, to that purpose?" said Henry.

"Your son," replied the Doctor, "wrote to me by a messenger: he seldom fails to do so, being of great importance it is that I should know every news. Means of escape are provided on the

## WOODSTOCK.

and Master Kerneguy must be ready to start with your son the instant he appears."

"It is strange," said the knight ; "for forty years I have dwelt in this house, man and boy, and the point only was how to make the day pass over our heads ; for if I did not scheme out some hunting match or hawking, or the like, I might have sat here on my arm-chair, as undisturbed as a sleeping dormouse, from one end of the year to the other, and now I am more like a hare on her form, that dare not sleep unless with her eyes open, and scuds off when the wind rustles among the fern."

"It is strange," said Alice, looking at Dr. Rochecliffe, "that the roundhead steward has told you nothing of this. He is usually communicative enough of the motions of his party ; and I saw you close together this morning."

"I must be closer with him this evening," said the Doctor gloomily ; "but he will not blab."

"I wish you may not trust him too much," said Alice in reply.—"To me, that man's face, with all its shrewdness, evinces such a dark expression, that methinks I read treason in his very eye."

"Be assured, that matter is looked to," answered the Doctor, in the same ominous tone as before. No one replied, and there was a chilling and anxious feeling of apprehension which seemed to sink down on the company at once, like those sensations which make such constitutions as are particularly subject to the electrical influence, conscious of an approaching thunderstorm.

The disguised Monarch, apprised that day to be prepared on short notice to quit his temporary asylum, felt *his own share of the gloom which involved the little society. But he was the first also to shake it off, as what neither suited his character nor his situation. Society was the leading distinction of the former, and*

## WOODSTOCK.

mind, not depression of spirits, was required  
er.

"make the hour heavier," he said, "by being  
oly about it. Had you not better join me,  
Alice, in Patrick Carey's jovial farewell?—Ah,  
ot know Pat Carey—a younger brother of Lord  
l's?"

rother of the immortal Lord Falkland's, and  
ongs?" said the Doctor.

h, Doctor, the Muses take tithe as well as the  
ch," said Charles, "and have their share in every  
ily of distinction. You do not know the words,  
stress Alice, but you can aid me, notwithstanding, in  
e burden at least—

Come, now that we're parting, and 'tis one to ten  
If the towers of sweet Woodstock I e'er see agen,  
Let us e'en have a frolic, and drink like tall men,  
While the goblet goes merrily round."

The song arose, but not with spirit. It was one of  
those efforts at forced mirth, by which, above all other  
modes of expressing it, the absence of real cheerfulness  
is most distinctly intimated. Charles stopped the song,  
and upbraided the choristers.

"You sing, my dear Mistress Alice, as if you were  
chanting one of the seven penitential psalms; and you,  
good Doctor, as if you recited the funeral service."

The Doctor rose hastily from the table, and turned to  
the window; for the expression connected singularly  
with the task which he was that evening to discharge.  
Charles looked at him with some surprise; for the peril  
in which he lived made him watchful of the slightest  
motions of those around him—then turned to Sir Henry,  
and said, "My honoured host, can you tell any reason  
for this moody fit, which has so strangely crept upon us  
all?"

"Not I, my dear Louis," replied the knight; "I ha-



## WOODSTOCK.

no skill in these nice quilllets of philosophy. I could as soon undertake to tell you the reason why Bevis turns round three times before he lies down. I can only say for myself, that if age and sorrow and uncertainty be enough to break a jovial spirit, or at least to bend it now and then, I have my share of them all ; so that I, for one, cannot say that I am sad merely because I am not merry. I have but too good cause for sadness. I would I saw my son, were it but for a minute."

Fortune seemed for once disposed to gratify the old man ; for Albert Lee entered at that moment. He was dressed in a riding suit, and appeared to have travelled hard. He cast his eye hastily around as he entered. It rested for a second on that of the disguised Prince, and, satisfied with the glance which he received in lieu, he hastened, after the fashion of the olden day, to kneel down to his father, and request his blessing.

"It is thine, my boy," said the old man ; a tear springing to his eyes as he laid his hand on the long locks, which distinguished the young cavalier's rank and principles, and which, usually combed and curled with some care, now hung wild and dishevelled about his shoulders. They remained an instant in this posture, when the old man suddenly started from it, as if ashamed of the emotion which he had expressed before so many witnesses, and passing the back of his hand hastily across his eyes, bid Albert get up and mind his supper, "since I dare say you have ridden fast and far since you last baited—and we'll send round a cup to his health, if Doctor Rochecliffe and the good company please—Joceline, thou knave, skink about—thou look'st as if thou hadst seen a ghost."

"Joceline," said Alice, "is sick for sympathy—one of the stags ran at Phœbe Mayflower to-day, and she was un to have Joceline's assistance to drive the creature off the girl has been in fits since she came home."

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"Silly skut," said the old knight—"She a woodman's daughter!—But, Joceline, if the deer gets dangerous, you must send a broad arrow through him."

"It will not need, Sir Henry," said Joceline, speaking with great difficulty of utterance—"he is quiet enough now—he will not offend in that sort again."

"See it be so," replied the knight; "remember Mistress Alice often walks in the Chase. And now, fill round, and fill, too, a cup to thyself to over-red thy fear, as mad Will has it. Tush, man, Phoebe will do well enough—she only screamed and ran, that thou might'st have the pleasure to help her. Mind what thou dost, and do not go spilling the wine after that fashion.—Come, here is a health to our wanderer, who has come to us again."

"None will pledge it more willingly than I," said the disguised Prince, unconsciously assuming an importance which the character he personated scarce warranted; but Sir Henry, who had become fond of the supposed page, with all his peculiarities, imposed only a moderate rebuke upon his petulance. "Thou art a merry, good-humoured youth, Louis," he said, "but it is a world to see how the forwardness of the present generation hath gone beyond the gravity and reverence which in my youth was so regularly observed towards those of higher rank and station—I dared no more have given my own tongue the rein, when there was a doctor of divinity in company, than I would have dared to have spoken in church in service time."

"True, sir," said Albert, hastily interfering; "but Master Kerneguy had the better right to speak at present, that I have been absent on his business as well as my own, have seen several of his friends, and bring him important intelligence."

*Charles was about to rise and beckon Albert aside, naturally impatient to know what news he had procured*

sit still, and not show any anxiety, since, in case of a sudden discovery, the violence of Sir Henry Lee's feelings might have been likely to attract too much attention.

Charles, therefore, only replied, as to the knight's stricture, that he had a particular title to be sudden and unceremonious in expressing his thanks to Colonel Lee—that gratitude was apt to be unmannerly—finally, that he was much obliged to Sir Henry for his admonition; and that, quit Woodstock when he would, “he was sure to leave it a better man than he came there.”

His speech was of course ostensibly directed towards the father; but a glance at Alice assured her that she had her full share in the compliment.

“I fear,” he concluded, addressing Albert, “that you come to tell us our stay here must be very short.”

“A few hours only,” said Albert—“just enough for needful rest for ourselves and our horses. I have provisions which are good and tried. But Doctor [unclear] with me. I expected to have [unclear] but where I left the

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countenance was usually that of alacrity itself extraordinary. Now, however, he seemed to

"Will you go with me a little way, Doctor?" he said, and drew himself closely to Rochecliffe.

"You puppy, fool, and blockhead," said the knight, "dost thou ask Doctor Rochecliffe to bear thee company this hour?—Out, hound!—get down to the yonder instantly, or I will break the knave's pate."  
e."

Celine looked with an eye of agony at the divine, as entreating him to interfere in his behalf; but just as he was about to speak, a most melancholy howling arose from the hall-door, and a dog was heard scratching for admittance.

"What ails Bevis next?" said the old knight. "I think this must be All-Fools Day, and that everything around me is going mad!"

The same sound startled Albert and Charles from a private conference in which they had engaged, and Albert ran to the hall-door to examine personally into the cause of the noise.

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Now when he thinks he has the charge of something important. He entered, therefore, drooping his tail, slouching his head and ears, and walking the stately yet melancholy dignity of a war-horse at his master's funeral. In this manner he paced through the room, went straight up to Joceline, who had been regarding him with astonishment, and uttered a short and melancholy howl, laid at his feet the thing which he bore in his mouth. Joceline stooped, took from the floor a man's glove, of the fashion worn by the troopers, having something like the old-fashioned gauntlet projections of thick leather arising from the wrist, which go half-way up to the elbow, to secure the arm against a cut with a sword. But Joceline had no sooner looked at what in itself was so common an object, than he dropped it from his hand, staggered backward, uttered a groan, and nearly fell to the ground.

"Now, the coward's curse be upon thee for an idiot!" cried the knight, who had picked up the glove, and was staring at it—"thou shouldst be sent back to school, bludgeoned till the craven's blood was switched out of thee.—What dost thou look at but a glove, thou base fellow, and a very dirty glove, too? Stay, here is blood—Joseph Tomkins? Why, that is the round-headed fellow—I wish he hath not come to some mischief for this is not dirt on the cheveron, but blood. The dog may have bit the fellow, and yet the dog seemed to love him well too, or the stag may have hurt him. Joceline, instantly, and see where he is—wind your

"I cannot go," said Joliffe, "unless"—and again he looked piteously at Dr. Rochecliffe, who saw no time to be lost in appeasing the ranger's terrors, as his horse was most needful in the present circumstances. "Take your pade and mattock," he whispered to him.

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"and a dark lantern, and meet me in the Wilderness."

Joceline left the room ; and the Doctor, before following him, had a few words of explanation with Colonel Lee. His own spirit, far from being dismayed on the occasion, rather rose higher, like one whose natural element was intrigue and danger. "Here hath been wild work," he said, "since you parted. Tomkins was rude to the wench Phœbe—Joceline and he had a brawl together, and Tomkins is lying dead in the thicket, not far from Rosamond's Well. It will be necessary that Joceline and I go directly to bury the body ; for, besides that some one might stumble upon it and raise an alarm, this fellow Joceline will never be fit for any active purpose till it is under ground. Though as stout as a lion, the under-keeper has his own weak side, and is more afraid of a dead body than a living one. When do you propose to start to-morrow ?"

"By daybreak, or earlier," said Colonel Lee ; "but we will meet again. A vessel is provided, and I have relays in more places than one—we go off from the coast of Sussex ; and I am to get a letter at —, acquainting me precisely with the spot."

"Wherefore not go off instantly ?" said the Doctor.

"The horses would fail us," replied Albert ; "they have been hard ridden to-day."

"Adieu," said Rochecliffe, "I must to my task—Do you take rest and repose for yours. To conceal a slaughtered body, and convey on the same night a king from danger and captivity, are two feats which have fallen to few folks save myself ; but let me not, while putting on my harness, boast myself as if I were taking it off after a victory." So saying, he left the apartment, and muffling himself in his cloak, went out into what was called the Wilderness.

*The weather was a raw frost. The night lay in parts*

to be but trusty Phil Hazeldine! Well, I don't know whether it was right or wrong, but he was my friend and pot-companion, and I took his word as an amendment in future; and he helped me to hang the deer on a tree, and I came back with a horse to carry him to the Lodge, and tell the knight the whole story, all but Phil's name. But the rogues had been too

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ney had flayed and dressed the deer, and  
1, and carried him off, and left the hide and  
1 chime, saying—

ne haunch to thee,  
The breast to me,  
The hide and the horns for the keeper's fee.

1 I knew for one of Phil's mad pranks, that he  
play in those days with any lad in the country.  
was so nettled, that I made the deer's hide be  
ed and dressed by a tanner, and swore that it  
uld be his winding-sheet or mine ; and though I  
1 long repented my rash oath, yet now, Doctor, you  
e what it has come to—though I forgot it, the devil did  
ot."

"It was a very wrong thing to make a vow so sinful,"  
said Rochecliffe ; "but it would have been greatly worse  
had you endeavoured to keep it. Therefore, I bid you  
cheer up," said the good divine ; "for in this unhappy  
case, I could not have wished, after what I have heard  
from Phoebe and yourself, that you should have kept  
your hand still, though I may regret that the blow has  
proved fatal. Nevertheless, thou hast done even that  
which was done by the great and inspired legislator,  
when he beheld an Egyptian tyrannising over a Hebrew,  
saying that in the case present, it was a female, when,  
says the Septuagint, *Percussum Egyptium abscondit  
sabulo* ; the meaning whereof I will explain to you an-  
other time. Wherefore, I exhort you not to grieve  
beyond measure ; for although this circumstance is un-  
happy in time and place, yet, from what Phœbe hath in-  
formed me of yonder wretch's opinions, it is much to be  
regretted that his brains had not been beaten out in  
his cradle, rather than that he had grown up to be one of  
those Grindlestonians, or Mugglestonians, in whom is  
the perfection of every foul and blasphemous heresy.



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united with such a universal practice of hypocritical assentation as would deceive their master, even Satan himself."

"Nevertheless, sir," said the forester, "I hope you will bestow some of the service of the Church on this poor man, as it was his last wish, naming you, sir, at the same time ; and unless this were done, I should scarce dare to walk out in the dark again for my whole life."

"Thou art a silly fellow ; but if," continued the Doctor, "he named me as he departed, and desired the last rites of the Church, there was, it may be, a turning from evil and a seeking to good even in his last moments ; and if Heaven granted him grace, to form a prayer so fitting, wherefore should man refuse it? All I fear is the briefness of time."

"Nay, your reverence may cut the service somewhat short," said Joceline ; "assuredly he does not deserve the whole of it ; only if something were not to be done, I believe I should flee the country. 'They were his last words ; and methinks he sent Bevis with his glove to put me in mind of them.'"

"Out, fool ! Do you think," said the Doctor, "dead men send gauntlets to the living, like knights in a romance? or, if so, would they choose dogs to carry their challenges? I tell thee, fool, the cause was natural enough. Bevis, questing about, found the body, and brought the glove to you to intimate where it was lying, and to require assistance ; for such is the high instinct of these animals towards one in peril."

"Nay, if you think so, Doctor," said Joceline—"and, doubtless, I must say, Bevis took an interest in the man—if indeed it was not something worse in the shape of *Bevis*, for methought his eyes looked wild and fiery, as if he would have spoken."

*As he talked thus, Joceline rather hung back, and, in doing so, displeased the Doctor, who exclaimed, "Come on, thou lazy laggard. Art thou a soldier, and a*

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so much afraid of a dead man? Thou  
in battle and in chase, I warrant thee."  
their backs were to me," said Joceline. "I  
of them cast back his head, and glare at me  
and did, his eye retaining a glance of hatred,  
fear and reproach, till it became fixed like  
were you not with me, and my master's  
something else, very deeply at stake, I  
would not again look at him for all Wood-

stock, though," said the Doctor, suddenly  
here is the place where he lies. Come  
to the copse; take care of stumbling—  
it is just fitting, and we will draw the briers  
afterwards."

For thus issued his directions, he assisted  
the execution of them; and while his attendant  
dug a shallow and misshapen grave, a task  
made of the soil, perplexed with roots, and  
under the influence of the frost, rendered very  
difficult, he read a few passages out of the funeral  
service in order to appease the superstitious terrors  
of the people, partly because he held it matter of con-  
science to deny the Church's rites to one who had  
suffered in extremity.

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## CHAP. XXXII.

*Be ye, — on with your vizards.* — HENRY IV.

company whom we had left in Victor Lee's  
room were about to separate for the night.  
He had risen to take a formal leave of each  
when a tap was heard at the hall door. Albert,  
of the party, hastened to open it, enjoining

at, until he had  
when he gained  
there, and what

vice.  
How?" said Albert  
hout.

If the world calls me  
but my name is Spittal

from him?" demanded

Roger Wildrake, esquire,  
ou," said the boy; "and  
stress Lee, which I am  
a would but open the do  
a do nothing with a th

that drunken rakehell,"  
his sister, who had cre

hasty in concluding so  
is moment the least trifle  
t token has Master Wild

y valuable neither," replie  
scious you should get it,  
as one would chuck out  
pped by the soldiers."  
aid Alice to her brother  
ake."

o whom her feelings of  
communicated, opened t  
e boy, whose appearan  
f a skinned rabbit, in

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ould at another time have furnished them with it. The urchin messenger, entered the hall, several odd bows and congés, and delivered the cock's feather\* with much ceremony to the young assuring her it was the prize she had won upon a about hawking.

"Prithce, my little man," said Albert, "was your drunk or sober, when he sent thee all this way a feather at this time of night?"

"With reverence, sir," said the boy, "he was what *he* s sober, and what I would call concerned in liquor any other person."

"Curse on the drunken coxcomb!" said Albert.—  
'There is a tester for thee, boy, and tell thy master to break his jests on suitable persons, and at fitting times."

"Stay yet a minute," exclaimed Alice; "we must not go too fast—this craves wary walking."

"A feather," said Albert; "all this work about a feather! Why, Doctor Rochecliffe, who can suck intelligence out of every trifle as a magpie would suck an egg, could make nothing of this."

"Let us try what we can do without him then," said Alice. Then addressing herself to the boy,—  
"So there are strangers at your master's?"

"At Colonel Everard's, madam, which is the same thing," said Spitfire.

"And what manner of strangers," said Alice; "guests, I suppose?"

"Ay, mistress," said the boy, "a sort of guests that make themselves welcome wherever they come, if they meet not a welcome from their landlord—soldiers, madam."

"The men that have been long lying at Woodstock?"  
said Albert.

"No, sir," said Spitfire, "new comers, with gallant  
K K

## WOODSTOCK.

buff-coats and steel breastplates ; and their commander—your honour and your ladyship never saw such a man—at least I am sure Bill Spitfire never did."

"Was he tall or short?" said Albert, now much alarmed.

"Neither one nor other," said the boy ; "stout made, with slouching shoulders ; a nose large, and a face one would not like to say No to. He had several officers with him. I saw him but for a moment, but I shall never forget him while I live."

"You are right," said Albert Lee to his sister, pulling her to one side—"quite right—the Archfiend himself is upon us !"

"And the feather," said Alice, whom fear had rendered apprehensive of slight tokens, "means flight—and a woodcock is a bird of passage."

"You have hit it," said her brother ; "but the time has taken us cruelly short. Give the boy a trifle more—nothing that can excite suspicion, and dismiss him. I must summon Rochecliffe and Joceline."

He went accordingly, but, unable to find those he sought, he returned with hasty steps to the parlour, where, in his character of Louis, the page was exerting himself to detain the old knight, who, while laughing at the tales he told him, was anxious to go to see what was passing in the hall.

"What is the matter, Albert?" said the old man ; "who calls at the Lodge at so undue an hour, and wherefore is the hall-door opened to them? I will not have my rules, and the regulations laid down for keeping this house, broken through, because I am old and poor. Why answer you not? why keep a chattering with Louis Kerneguy, and neither of you all the while minding what I say?—Daughter Alice, have you sense and civility enough to tell me, what or who it is that is admitted here contrary to my general orders?"

## WOODSTOCK.

"No one, sir," replied Alice; "a boy brought a message, which I fear is an alarming one."

"There is only fear, sir," said Albert, stepping forward, that whereas we thought to have stayed with you till to-morrow, we must now take farewell of you to-night."

"Not so, brother," said Alice, "you must stay and aid the defence here—if you and Master Kerneguy are both missed, the pursuit will be instant, and probably successful; but if you stay, the hiding-places about this house will take some time to search. You can change coats with Kerneguy too."

"Right, noble wench," said Albert; "most excellent—yes—Louis, I remain as Kerneguy, you fly as young Master Lee."

"I cannot see the justice of that," said Charles.

"Nor I neither," said the knight, interfering. "Men come and go, lay schemes, and alter them, in my house, without deigning to consult me? And who is Master Kerneguy, or what is he to me, that my son must stay and take the chance of mischief, and this your Scotch page is to escape in his dress? I will have no such contrivance carried into effect, though it were the finest cobweb that was ever woven in Dr. Rochecliffe's brains.—I wish you no ill, Louis; thou art a lively boy; but I have been somewhat too lightly treated in this, man."

"I am fully of your opinion, Sir Henry," replied the person whom he addressed. "You have been, indeed, repaid for your hospitality by want of that confidence, which could never have been so justly reposed. But the moment is come, when I must say, in a word, I am that unfortunate Charles Stuart, whose lot it has been to become the cause of ruin to his best friends, and whose present residence in your family threatens to bring destruction to you, and all around you."

"*Master Louis Kerneguy,*" said the knight, very angrily, "*I will teach you to choose the subjects of your*



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our could use to get them to the rendezvous, and to meet Sir Thomas Acland and fresh cattle. Let me, Colonel Lee, and let us run for it. The odds have been beat us in battle; but if it come to a race, I think I can show which has the best

But then," said Albert, "we lose all the time which otherwise be gained by the defence of this house—leaving none here but my poor father, incapable from his state of doing anything; and you will be instantly pursued by fresh horses, while ours are unfit for the road. Oh, where is the villain Joceline?"

"What can have become of Dr. Rochécliffe?" said Alice; "he that is so ready with advice;—where can they be gone? Oh, if my father could but rouse himself!"

"Your father *is* roused," said Sir Henry, rising and stepping up to them with all the energy of full manhood in his countenance and motions—"I did but gather my thoughts—for when did these fail a Lee when his King needed counsel or aid?" He then began to speak, with the ready and distinct utterance of a general at the head of an army, ordering every motion for attack and defence—unmoved himself, and his own energy compelling obedience, and that cheerful obedience, from all who heard him. "Daughter," he said, "beat up Dame Jellicot—Let Phœbe rise if she were dying, and secure doors and windows."

"That hath been done regularly since—we have been thus far honoured," said his daughter, looking at the King—"yet, let them go through the chambers once more." And Alice retired to give the orders, and presently returned.

The old knight proceeded, in the same decided tone of promptitude and despatch—"Which is your first stage?"

"Gray's—Rothebury, by Henley; where Sir Thomas Acland and young Knollys late 'Robinson'



to." He went hastily to the cabinet which stood of the oriel windows, and searched for something drawers, pulling out one after another.

"We lose time, father," said Albert, afraid that *telligence and energy* which the old man displayed *been but a temporary flash of the lamp, which we to relapse into evening twilight.*

"Go to, sir boy," said his father sharply :  
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thee to tax me in this presence !—Know, that were the whole roundheads that are out of hell in present assemblage round Woodstock, I could send away the Royal Hope of England by a way that the wisest of them could never guess.—Alice, my love, ask no questions, but speed to the kitchen, and fetch a slice or two of beef, or better of venison ; cut them long, and thin, d'ye mark me"—

" This is wandering of the mind," said Albert, apart to the King. " We do him wrong, and your Majesty harm, to listen to him."

" I think otherwise," said Alice, " and I know my father better than you." So saying, she left the room, to fulfil her father's orders.

" I think so, too," said Charles—" in Scotland the Presbyterian ministers, when thundering in their pulpits on my own sins and those of my house, took the freedom to call me to my face Jeroboam, or Rehoboam, or some such name, for following the advice of young counsellors—Oddsfish, I will take that of the grey beard for once, for never saw I more sharpness and decision than in the countenance of that noble old man."

" By this time Sir Henry had found what he was seeking. " In this tin box," he said, " are six balls prepared of the most cordial spices, mixed with medicaments of the choicest and most invigorating quality. Given from hour to hour, wrapt in a covering of good beef or venison, a horse of spirit will not flag for five hours, at the speed of fifteen miles an hour ; and, please God, the fourth of the time places your Majesty in safety—

What remains may be useful on some future occasion. Martin knows how to administer them ; and Albert's weary cattle shall be ready, if walked gently for ten minutes, in running to devour the way, as old Will says—*nay, waste not time in speech, your Majesty does me out too much honour in using what is your own.*—Now, see if the coast is clear, Albert, and let his Majesty set

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off instantly—We will play our parts but ill, if any t the chase after him for these two hours that are betw night and day—Change dresses, as you proposed, yonder sleeping apartment—something may be mad that too."

"But, good Sir Henry," said the King, "your overlooks a principal point. I have, indeed, come fr the underkeeper's hut you mention to this place, b was by daylight, and under guidance—I shall never my way thither in utter darkness, and without a g —I fear you must let the Colonel go with me; an entreat and command you will put yourself to no tro or risk to defend the house—only make what delay can in showing its secret recesses."

"Rely on me, my royal and liege Sovereign," i Sir Henry; "but Albert ~~must~~ remain here, and A shall guide your Majesty to Joceline's hut in stead."

"Alice!" said Charles, stepping back in surpris "why, it is dark night—and—and—and—" He glan his eye towards Alice, who had by this time returne the apartment, and saw doubt and apprehension in look; an intimation, that the reserve under which had placed his disposition for gallantry since the m ing of the proposed duel, had not altogether effaced recollection of his previous conduct. He hastened put a strong negative upon a proposal which appe so much to embarrass her. "It is impossible for indeed, Sir Henry, to use Alice's services—I must w as if bloodhounds were at my heels."

"Alice shall trip it," said the knight; "with wench in Oxfordshire, and what would your Majes best speed avail, if you knew not the way to go?"

"Vay, nay, Sir Henry," continued the King, " night is too dark—we stay too long—I will find it elf."

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in exchanging your dress with Albert,"  
"leave me to take care of the rest."

inclined to expostulate, withdrew, how-  
partment, where young Lee and he were  
clothes; while Sir Henry said to his  
Get thee a cloak, wench, and put on thy  
es. Thou might'st have ridden Pixie, but  
thing spirited, and thou art a timid horse-  
nd ever wert so—the only weakness I have  
thee."

, my father," said Alice, fixing her eyes very  
y on Sir Henry's face, "must I really go alone  
e King? might not Phœbe or Dame Jellicot go  
as?"

No—no—no," answered Sir Henry; "Phœbe, the  
/ slut, has, as you well know, been in fits to-night,  
d, I take it, such a walk as you must take is no charm  
r hysterics—Dame Jellicot hobbles as slow as a broken-  
winded mare—besides, her deafness, were there occasion  
to speak to her—No—no—you shall go alone, and en-  
title yourself to have it written on your tomb. 'Here lies  
she who saved the King!'—And, hark you, do not think  
of returning to-night, but stay at the verdurer's with his  
niece—The Park and Chase will shortly be filled with  
our enemies, and whatever chances here you will learn  
early enough in the morning."

"And what is it I may then learn?" said Alice—  
"Alas, who can tell?—Oh, dearest father, let me stay  
and share your fate! I will pull off the timorous woman,  
and fight for the King, if it be necessary.—But—I can-  
not think of becoming his only attendant in the dark  
night, and through a road so lonely."

"How!" said the knight, raising his voice; "do you  
*bring ceremonious and silly scruples forward, when the*  
*King's safety, nay, his life is at stake! By this mark of*  
*loyalty,"* stroking his grey beard as he spoke, "could I

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think thou wert other than becomes a daughter of the house of Lee, I would "——

At this moment the King and Albert interrupted him by entering the apartment, having exchanged dresses, and, from their stature, bearing some resemblance to each other, though Charles was evidently a plain, and Lee a handsome young man. Their complexions were different; but the difference could not be immediately noticed, Albert having adopted a black peruke, and darkened his eyebrows.

Albert Lee walked out to the front of the mansion, to give one turn around the Lodge, in order to discover in what direction any enemies might be approaching, that they might judge of the road which it was safest for the royal fugitive to adopt. Meanwhile the King, who was first in entering the apartment, had heard a part of the angry answer which the old knight made to his daughter, and was at no loss to guess the subject of his resentment. He walked up to him with the dignity which he perfectly knew how to assume when he chose it.

"Sir Henry," he said, "it is our pleasure, nay, our command, that you forbear all exertion of paternal authority in this matter. Mistress Alice, I am sure, must have good and strong reasons for what she wishes; and I should never pardon myself were she placed in an unpleasant situation on my account. I am too well acquainted with woods and wildernesses to fear losing my way among my native oaks of Woodstock."

"Your Majesty shall not incur the danger," said Alice, her temporary hesitation entirely removed by the calm, clear, and candid manner in which Charles uttered these *last words*. "You shall run no risk that I can prevent; and the unhappy chances of the times in which I have lived have from experience made the forest as well known to me by night as by day. So, if you scorn not my company, let us away instantly."

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pany is given with good-will, I accept  
," replied the monarch.

she said, "most willingly. Let me be  
at to show that zeal and that confidence,  
all England will one day emulously display  
your Majesty."

ed these words with an alacrity of spirit, and  
rifling change of habit with a speed and dex-  
ch showed that all her fears were gone, and  
heart was entirely in the mission on which her  
ad despatched her.

It is safe around," said Albert Lee, showing him-  
"you may take which passage you will—the most  
ate is the best."

Charles went gracefully up to Sir Henry Lee ere his  
parture, and took him by the hand.—"I am too  
roud to make professions," he said, "which I may be  
oo poor ever to realise. But while Charles Stuart  
lives, he lives the obliged and indebted debtor of Sir  
Henry Lee."

"Say not so, please your Majesty, say not so," ex-  
claimed the old man, struggling with the hysterical sobs  
which rose to his throat. "He who might claim all,  
cannot become indebted by accepting some small  
part."

"Farewell, good friend, farewell!" said the King ;  
"think of me as a son, a brother to Albert and to Alice,  
who are, I see, already impatient. Give me a father's  
blessing, and let me be gone."

"The God, through whom kings reign, bless your  
Majesty," said Sir Henry, kneeling and turning his  
reverend face and clasped hands up to Heaven—"The  
Lord of Hosts bless you, and save your Majesty from  
*your present dangers, and bring you in his own good  
time to the safe possession of the crown that is your  
due !*"

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Charles received his blessing like that of a father, and Alice and he departed on their journey.

As they left the apartment, the old knight let his hands sink gently as he concluded this fervent ejaculation, his head sinking at the same time. His son dared not disturb his meditation, yet feared the strength of his feelings might overcome that of his constitution, and that he might fall into a swoon. At length he ventured to approach and gradually touch him. The old knight started to his feet, and was at once the same, alert, active-minded, forecasting director, which he had shown himself a little before.

"You are right, boy," he said, "we must be up and doing. They lie, the roundheaded traitors, that call him dissolute and worthless! He hath feelings worthy the son of the blessed Martyr. You tremble at danger, he would be rather than take Alice's guidance seemed in doubt about going. selfish, and thinks not of the feelings thou drawn bolt and bar after them when they left the hall."

"I let them out at the little Colonel; "and when I returned found you ill."

"Joy—joy, only joy, Albert—I of doubt to cross my breast. O descendant of an hundred kings not be given up to the ruffians. eye as he took leave of me—I am not die for him, boy?"

"If I lay my life down for him

"I would only regret it, because his escape to-morrow."

"Well, let us to this gear," as thou that thou know'st enough

fathers have died ; and in the cause for which they lived. But he comes—Hush !—Albert, hast thou succeeded ? hast thou taken royalty upon thee so as to pass current ? ”

“ I have, sir,” replied Albert ; “ the women will swear that Louis Kerneguy was in the house this very last minute.”

“ Right, for they are good and faithful creatures,” said the knight, “ and would swear what was for his Majesty’s safety at any rate ; yet they will do it with more nature and effect if they believe they are swearing truth—How didst thou impress the deceit upon them ? ”

“ By a trifling adoption of the royal manner, sir, no worth mentioning.”



"Out, rogue!" replied the knight. "I fear the King's character will suffer under your mummery."

"Umph," said Albert, muttering what he dared not utter aloud—"were I to follow the example close up I know whose character would be in the greatest danger."

"Well, now we must adjust the defence of the outworks, the signals, etc., betwixt us both, and the best way to baffle the enemy for the longest time possible." He then again had recourse to the secret drawers of his cabinet, and pulled out a piece of parchment on which was a plan. "This," said he, "is a scheme of the citadel, as I call it, which may hold out long enough after you have been forced to evacuate the places of retreat you are already acquainted with. The ranger was always sworn to keep this plan secret, save from one person only, in case of sudden death.—Let us sit down and study it together."

They accordingly adjusted their measures in a manner which will better show itself from what afterwards took place, than were we to state the various schemes which they proposed, and provisions made against events that did not arrive.

At length young Lee, armed and provided with some food and liquor, took leave of his father, and went and shut himself up in Victor Lee's apartment, from which was an opening to the labyrinth of private apartments or hiding-places, that had served the associates so well in the fantastic tricks which they had played off at the expense of the Commissioners of the Commonwealth.

"I trust," said Sir Henry, sitting down by his desk after having taken a tender farewell of his son, "that Rochecliffe has not blabbed out the secret of the plot to yonder fellow Tomkins, who was not unlikely to prate it out of school.—But here am I seated—perhaps for

**A**D those whose unpleasant visit Sir Henry expected come straight to the Lodge, instead of staying three hours at Woodstock, they would have secured their prey. But the Familist, partly to prevent the King's escape, partly to render himself of more importance in the affair, had represented the party at the Lodge as being constantly on the alert, and had therefore inculcated upon Cromwell the necessity of his remaining quiet until he (Tomkins) should appear to give him notice that the household were retired to rest. On this condition he undertook, not only to discover the apartment in which the unfortunate Charles slept, but, if possible, to find some mode of fastening the door on the outside, so as to render flight impossible. He had also promised to secure the key of a postern, by which the soldiers might be admitted into the house without exciting alarm. Nay, the matter might, by means of his local knowledge, be managed, as he represented it, with *such security*, that he would undertake to place his *Excellency*, or whomsoever he might appoint for the

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he side of Charles Stuart's bed, ere he had last night's claret. Above all, he had stated the style of the old house, there were many posterns which must be carefully guarded lest alarm was caught by those within, otherwise the whole enterprise might be exposed. He had therefore besought Cromwell to wait in the village if he found him not there on his march, and assured him that the marching and coming of soldiers was at present so common, that no news were carried to the Lodge that fresh troops arrived in the borough, so ordinary a circumstance would not give them the least alarm. He recommended the soldiers chosen for this service should be men who could be depended upon—no fainters in spirit—no men who would turn back from Mount Gilead for fear of the enemy, but men of war, accustomed to strike with confidence and to need no second blow. Finally, he recommended that it would be wisely done if the General trusted Pearson, or any other officer whom he could trust, into the command of the detachment, instead of his own person, if he should think it proper to do so, and not even from the soldiers.

General Pearson's counsels Cromwell had punctually followed. He had travelled in the van of this detachment, and had picked soldiers, whom he had selected with care, men of dauntless resolution, bred in the school of war, and who were steeled against all hesitation and compassion, by the deep fanaticism which was their chief principle of action. To whom, as their General, and no less as one of the Elect, the commands of Oliver were given, and which he executed with the mission from the Deity.

How deep was the General's mortification at the absence of the personage on whose agency he so confidently reckoned, and many conjectures he formed

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ause of such mysterious conduct. Sometimes at Tomkins had been overcome by liquor, a which Cromwell knew him to be addicted ; and held this opinion, he discharged his wrath in imprecations, which, of a different kind from the wild and curses of the cavaliers, had yet in them as blasphemy, and more determined malevolence. At times he thought some unexpected alarm, or perhaps some drunken cavalier revel, had caused the delay of Woodstock Lodge to make later hours than usual. To this conjecture, which appeared the most probable of any, his mind often recurred ; and it was the hope that Tomkins would still appear at the rendezvous, which induced him to remain at the borough, anxious to receive communication from his emissary, and afraid of endangering the success of the enterprise by any premature exertion on his own part.

In the meantime, Cromwell, finding it no longer possible to conceal his personal presence, disposed of everything so as to be ready at a minute's notice. Half his soldiers he caused to dismount, and had the horses put into quarters ; the other half were directed to keep their horses saddled, and themselves ready to mount at a moment's notice. The men were brought into the house by turns, and had some refreshment, leaving a sufficient guard on the horses, which was changed from time to time.

Thus Cromwell waited with no little uncertainty, often casting an anxious eye upon Colonel Everard, who, he suspected, could, if he chose it, well supply the place of his absent confidant. Everard endured this calmly, with unaltered countenance, and brow neither ruffled nor dejected.

Midnight at length tolled, and it became necessary to take some decisive step. Tomkins might have been treacherous ; or, a suspicion which approached more

*utmost regularity, the whole body moving like c*

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hundred yards behind the rearmost of the party, came the troopers who remained and it seemed as if even the irrational sensible to Cromwell's orders, for the neigh, and even appeared to place their earth cautiously, and with less noise than

under, full of anxious thoughts, never spoke, force by whispers his caution respecting silence, men, surprised and delighted to find themselves under the command of their renowned General, destined, doubtless, for some secret service of high importance, used the utmost precaution in attending to his stated orders.

They marched down the street of the little borough in the order we have mentioned. Few of the townsmen were abroad ; and one or two, who had protracted the festivities of the evening to that unusual hour, were too happy to escape the notice of a strong party of soldiers, who often acted in the character of police, to inquire about their purpose for being under arms so late, or the route which they were pursuing.

The external gate of the chase had, ever since the party had arrived at Woodstock, been strictly guarded by three file of troopers, to cut off all communication between the Lodge and the town. Spitfire, Wildrake's emissary, who had often been a bird-nesting, or on similar mischievous excursions in the forest, had evaded these men's vigilance by climbing over a breach with which he was well acquainted, in a different part of the wall.

Between this party and the advanced guard of Cromwell's detachment, a whispered challenge was exchanged, according to the rules of discipline. The infantry entered the Park, and were followed by the cavalry, who were directed to avoid the hard road, and

they might not lurking there, under what pretence soever.

Meanwhile, the weather began to show itself as propitious to Cromwell, as he had found most incidents in the course of his successful career. The grey mist, which had hitherto obscured everything, and rendered marching in the wood embarrassing and difficult, had now given way to the moon, which, after many efforts, at length forced her way through the vapour, and hung her dim dull cresset in the heavens, which she enlightened, as the dying lamp of an anchorite does the cell in which he reposes. The party were in sight of the front of the palace, when Holdenough whispered to Everard, as they walked near each other—"See ye not, yonder flutters the mysterious light in the turret of the incontinent Rosamond? This night will try whether the devil of the Sectaries or the devil of the Malignants shall prove the stronger. O, sing jubilee, for the kingdom of Satan is divided against itself!"

Here the divine was interrupted by a non-commissioned officer who came hastily, yet with noiseless steps, to say, in a low stern whisper—"Silence, prisoner in the rear—silence, on pain of death."

A moment afterwards the whole party stopped their march, the word *halt* being passed from one to another, and instantly obeyed.

*The cause of this interruption was the hasty return of one of the flanking party to the main body, bringing news to Cromwell that they had seen a light in the wood some distance on the left.*  
"What can it be?" said Cromwell, his low stern voice.

alarm until I come. Should any attempt to escape, ~~kill~~ them."—He spoke that command with terrible emphasis.—"Kill them on the spot," he repeated, "be they who or what they will. Better so than trouble the Commonwealth with prisoners."

Pearson heard, and proceeded to obey his commander's orders.

Meanwhile, the future Protector disposed the small force which remained with him in such a manner that they should approach from different points at once the light which excited his suspicions, and gave them orders to creep as near to it as they could, taking care not to lose each other's support, and to be ready to rush in at the same moment, when he should give the sign, wh



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was to be a loud whistle. Anxious to ascertain the truth with his own eyes, Cromwell, who had by instinct all the habits of military foresight, which, in others, are the result of professional education and long experience, advanced upon the object of his curiosity. He skulked from tree to tree with the light step and prowling sagacity of an Indian bush-fighter ; and before any of his men had approached so near as to descry them, he saw, by the lantern which was placed on the ground, two men, who had been engaged in digging what seemed to be an ill-made grave. Near them lay extended something wrapped in a deer's hide, which greatly resembled the dead body of a man. They spoke together in a low voice, yet so that their dangerous auditor could perfectly overhear what they said.

"It is done at last," said one ; "the worst and hardest labour I ever did in my life. I believe there is no luck about me left. My very arms feel as if they did not belong to me ; and, strange to tell, toil as hard as I would, I could not gather warmth in my limbs."

"I have warmed me enough," said Rochecliffe, breathing short with fatigue.

"But the cold lies at my heart," said Joceline ; "I scarce hope ever to be warm again. It is strange, and a charm seems to be on us. Here have we been nigh two hours in doing what Diggen the sexton would have done to better purpose in half a one."

"We are wretched spadesmen enough," answered Dr. Rochecliffe. "Every man to his tools—thou to thy bugle-horn, and I to my papers in cipher. But do not be discouraged ; it is the frost on the ground, and the number of roots, which rendered our task difficult. And now, all due rites done to this unhappy man, and having read over him the service of the Church, *valeat quantum*, let us lay him decently in this place of last repose ; there will be small lack of him above ground."

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er up thy heart, man, like a soldier as thou art ;  
ave read the service over his body ; and should  
s permit it, we will have him removed to conse-  
ted ground, though he is all unworthy of such favour.  
re, help me to lay him in the earth ; we will drag  
iers and thorns over the spot, when we have shovelled  
st upon dust ; and do thou think of this chance more  
anfully ; and remember, thy secret is in thine own  
keeping."

"I cannot answer for that," said Joceline. "Methinks the very night-winds among the leaves will tell of what we have been doing—methinks the trees themselves will say 'There is a dead corpse lies among our roots.' Witnesses are soon found when blood hath been spilled."

"They are so, and that right early," exclaimed Cromwell, starting from the thicket, laying hold on Joceline, and putting a pistol to his head. At any other period of his life, the forester would, even against the odds of numbers, have made a desperate resistance ; but the horror he had felt at the slaughter of an old companion, although in defence of his own life, together with fatigue and surprise, had altogether unmanned him, and he was seized as easily as a sheep is secured by the butcher. Dr. Rochecliffe offered some resistance, but was presently secured by the soldiers who pressed around him.

"Look, some of you," said Cromwell, "what corpse this is upon whom these lewd sons of Belial have done a murder—Corporal Grace-be-here Humgudgeon, see, if thou knowest the face."

"I profess I do, even as I should do mine own in a mirror," snuffed the corporal, after looking on the countenance of the dead man by the help of the lantern.

"Of a verity it is our trusty brother in the faith, Joseph Tomkins."

"Tomkins !" exclaimed Cromwell, springing forward

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and satisfying himself with a glance at the features of the corpse—"Tomkins!—and murdered, as the friar of the temple intimates!—dogs that ye are, confess the truth—You have murdered him because you have covered his treachery—I should say his true spirit to the Commonwealth of England, and his hatred of the plots in which you would have engaged his simplicity."

"Ay," said Grace-be-here Humgudgeon, "and to misuse his dead body with your papistical doctrine as if you had crammed cold porridge into its mouth. I pray thee, General, let these men's bonds be made strong."

"Forbear, corporal," said Cromwell; "our presses.—Friend, to you, whom I believe to be Dr. Anthony Rochecliffe by name and surname, I have given the choice of being hanged at daybreak to-morrow or making atonement for the murder of one of the Lord's people, by telling what thou knowest of the secrets which are in yonder house."

"Truly, sir," replied Rochecliffe, "you found me in my duty as a clergyman, interring the dead; and respecting answering your questions, I am determined myself, and do advise my fellow-sufferer on this occasion"—

"Remove him," said Cromwell; "I know his neckedness of old, though I have made him plough a furrow, when he thought he was turning up his swathe—Remove him to the rear, and bring hither the other fellow—Come thou here—this way—closer.—Corporal Grace-be-here, do thou keep thy sword upon the belt with which he is bound. We must *care of our life for the sake of this distracted country though, lack-a-day, for its own proper worth we peril it for a pin's point.*—Now, mark me, fellow, *beforest buying thy life by a full confession, or*

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up to one of these old oaks.—How

er;" answered the under-keeper, affecting than was natural to him (for his frequent with Sir Henry Lee had partly softened and manners), "I think the oak is like to bear a—that is all."

not with me, friend," continued Oliver; "I thee in sincerity I am no trifler. What guests seen at yonder house called the Lodge?"

any a brave guest in my day, I'se warrant ye," said Joceline. "Ah, to see how the chimneys smoke some twelve years back! Ah, sir, a sniff ould have dined a poor man."

it, rascal!" said the General, "dost thou jeer Tell me at once what guests have been of late in dge—and look thee, friend, be assured, that in ng me this satisfaction, thou shalt not only rescue k from the halter, but render also an acceptable to the State, and one which I will see fittingly ed. For, truly, I am not of those who would ie rain fall only on the proud and stately plants, her would, so far as my poor wishes and prayers cerned, that it should also fall upon the lowly and : grass and corn, that the heart of the husband-ay be rejoiced, and that as the cedar of Lebanon in its height, in its boughs, and in its roots, so e humble and lowly hyssop that groweth upon the ourish, and—and, truly—Understand'st thou me,

st entirely, if it please your honour," said Joceline; : sounds as if you were preaching a sermon, and narvellous twang of doctrine with it."

en, in one word—thou knowest there is one Louis uy, or Carnego, or some such name, in hiding at re yonder?"

doors, I trow."

"A thousand pounds," said Cromwell, "do down to thee, if thou canst place that boy in power."

"A thousand pounds is a marvellous matter," said Joceline; "but I have more blood on my than I like already. I know not how the price may thrive—and, 'scape or hang, I have no mind to

"Away with him to the rear," said the General; let him not speak with his yoke-fellow yonder,—that I am to waste time in expecting to get milk mules.—Move on towards the Lodge."

They moved with the same silence as formerly, notwithstanding the difficulties which they encountered being unacquainted with the road and its various intricacies. At length they were challenged, in a low voice by one of their own sentinels, two concentric circles whom had been placed around the Lodge, so close to each other, as to preclude the possibility of an individual escaping from within. The outer guard was mainly by horse upon the roads and open lawn, and the ground was broken and bushy, by infantry. The inner circle was guarded by foot soldiers only. They were in the highest degree alert, expecting some resting and important consequences from the expedition on which they were engaged.

"Any news, Pearson?" said the General to his aide-camp, who came instantly to report to his superior.

He received for answer, "None."

*Cromwell led his officer forward just opposite the door of the Lodge, and there paused betwixt the ranks of guards, so that their conversation could be overheard.*

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He then pursued his inquiry, demanding—"Were there any lights, any appearances of stirring—any attempt at sally—any preparation for defence?"

"All as silent as the valley of the shadow of death—Even as the vale of Jehoshaphat."

"Pshaw! tell me not of Jehoshaphat, Pearson," said Cromwell. "These words are good for others, but not for thee. Speak plainly, and like a blunt soldier as thou art. Each man hath his own mode of speech; and bluntness, not sanctity, is thine."

"Well, then, nothing has been stirring," said Pearson. —"Yet peradventure"—

"Peradventure not me," said Cromwell, "or thou wilt tempt me to knock thy teeth out. I ever distrust a man when he speaks after another fashion from his own."

"Zounds! let me speak to an end," answered Pearson, "and I will speak in what language your Excellency will."

"Thy zounds, friend," said Oliver, "showeth little of grace, but much of sincerity. Go to, then—thou knowest I love and trust thee. Hast thou kept close watch? It behoves us to know that, before giving the alarm."

"On my soul," said Pearson, "I have watched as closely as a cat at a mouse-hole. It is beyond possibility that anything could have eluded our vigilance, or even stirred within the house, without our being aware of it."

"'Tis well," said Cromwell; "thy services shall not ~~be~~ forgotten, Pearson. Thou canst not preach and pray, ~~but~~ thou canst obey thine orders, Gilbert Pearson, and ~~that~~ may make amends."

"I thank your Excellency," replied Pearson; "but I ~~beg~~ leave to chime in with the humours of the times. A ~~poor~~ fellow hath no right to hold himself singular."

He paused, expecting Cromwell's orders what next was ~~to be~~ done, and, indeed, not a little surprised that the ~~general's~~ active and prompt spirit had suffered him

hands supported upon his sword, when he had taken out of the belt, and his stern brows bent on the ground. He waited for some time impatiently, yet afraid to interfere, lest he should awaken this unwonted fit of ill-timed melancholy into anger and impatience. He listened to the muttering sounds which escaped from the half-opening lips of his principal, in which the words, "hard necessity," which occurred more than once, were all of which the sense could be distinguished. "My Lord-General," at length, he said, "time flies."

"Peace, busy fiend, and urge me not!" said Cromwell. "Think'st thou, like other fools, that I have made a paction with the devil for success, and am bound to do my work within an appointed hour, lest the spell should lose its force?"

"I only think, my Lord-General," said Pearson, "that Fortune has put into your offer what you have long desired to make prize of, and that you hesitate."

Cromwell sighed deeply as he answered, "Ah, Pearson, in this troubled world, a man, who is called like me to work great things in Israel, had need to be, as the poets feign, a thing made of hardened metal, immovable to feelings of human charities, impassable, resistless. Pearson, the world will hereafter, perchance, think of me as being such a one as I have described, 'an iron man, and made of iron mould.'—Yet they will wrong my memory—my heart is flesh, and my blood is mild as that of others. When I was a sportsman, I have wept for the gallant heron that was struck down by my hawk, and sorrowed for the hare which lay screaming under the jaws of my greyhound; and canst thou think it a

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to me, that, the blood of this lad's father  
be measure upon my head, I should now put  
it of the son? They are of the kindly race of  
sovereigns, and doubtless, are adored like the  
s by those of their own party. I am called  
he, Bloodthirsty, Usurper, already, for shedding  
ood of one man, that the plague might be stayed  
as Achan was slain that Israel might thereafter  
d against the face of their enemies. Nevertheless,  
o has spoken unto me graciously since that high  
ed? Those who acted in the matter with me are  
willing that I should be the scape-goat of atonement—  
those who looked on and helped not, bear themselves  
now as if they had been borne down by violence ; and  
while I looked that they should shout applause on me,  
because of the victory of Worcester, whereof the Lord  
had made me the poor instrument, they look aside to  
say, ' Ha ! ha ! the King-killer, the Parricide—soon shall  
his place be made desolate.'—Truly it is a great thing,  
Gilbert Pearson, to be lifted above the multitude ; but  
when one feeleth that his exaltation is rather hailed with  
hate and scorn than with love and reverence—in sooth,  
it is still a hard matter for a mild, tender-conscienced,  
infirm spirit to bear—and God be my witness, that,  
rather than do this new deed, I would shed my own best  
heart's blood in a pitched-field, twenty against one." Here  
he fell into a flood of tears, which he was some-  
times wont to do. This extremity of emotion was of a  
singular character. It was not actually the result of  
penitence, and far less that of absolute hypocrisy, but  
arose merely from the temperature of that remarkable  
man, whose deep policy, and ardent enthusiasm, were  
intermingled with a strain of hypochondriacal passion,  
*which often led him to exhibit scenes of this sort, though  
seldom, as now, when he was called to the execution of  
great undertakings.*



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ill acquainted as he was with the peculiar General, was baffled and confounded by station and contrition, by which his enter- appeared to be so suddenly paralysed. ent's silence, he said, with some dryness of this be the case, it is a pity your Excellency

Corporal Humgudgeon and I, the greatest greatest sinner in your army, had done the divided the guilt and the honour betwixt us." said Cromwell, as if touched to the quick,

thou take the prey from the lion?" "The lion behaves like a village cur," said Pearson, "who now barks and seems as if he would tear pieces, and now flies from a raised stick or stone, I do not why I should fear him. If Lambert had been here had been less speaking and more action. Lambert! What of Lambert?" said Cromwell, sharply.

Only," said Pearson, "that I long since hesitated whether I should follow your Excellency or him—and I am to be uncertain whether I have made the best choice, that's all."

"Lambert!" exclaimed Cromwell, impatiently, "threatening his voice lest he should be overheard descending on the character of his rival,—"*What is Lambert—a tulip-fancying fellow, whom nature intended for a Dutch gardener at Delft or Rotterdam. Ungrateful as thou art, what could Lambert have done for thee?*"

"He would not," answered Pearson, "have I here hesitating before a locked door, when fortune presented the means of securing, by one blow, his fortune, and that of all who followed him."

"Thou art right, Gilbert Pearson," said Cromwell, "grasping his officer's hand, and strongly pressing it. *Be the half of this bold accompt thine, without reckoning be on earth or heaven.*"

ha  
u  
—  
;

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hole of it mine hereafter," said Pearson  
your Excellency have the advantage of it  
Step back to the rear till I force the door  
/ be danger, if despair induce them to make  
a sally."

if they do sally, is there one of my Ironsides  
as fire or steel less than myself?" said the  
"Let ten of the most determined men follow  
o with halberts, two with petronels, the others  
pistols—Let all their arms be loaded, and fire with-  
hesitation, if there is any attempt to resist or to sally  
n—Let Corporal Humgudgeon be with them, and  
thou remain here, and watch against escape, as thou  
ouldst watch for thy salvation."

The General then struck at the door with the hilt of  
his sword—at first with a single blow or two, then with a  
reverberation of strokes that made the ancient building  
ring again. This noisy summons was repeated once or  
twice without producing the least effect.

"What can this mean?" said Cromwell; "they  
cannot surely have fled, and left the house empty."

"No," replied Pearson, "I will ensure you against  
that; but your Excellency strikes so fiercely, you allow  
no time for an answer. Hark! I hear the baying of a  
hound, and the voice of a man who is quieting him—  
Shall we break in at once, or hold parley?"

"I will speak to them first," said Cromwell—"Hollo!  
who is within there?"

"Who is it inquires?" answered Sir Henry Lee from  
the interior; "or what want you here at this dead  
hour?"

"We come by warrant of the Commonwealth of  
England," said the General.

"I must see your warrant ere I undo either bolt or  
latch," replied the knight; "we are enough of us to man  
good the castle; neither I nor my fellows will deliver

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up but upon good quarters and conditions ; and we will not treat for these save in fair daylight."

" Since you will not yield to our right, you must try our might," replied Cromwell. " Look to yourselves within, the door will be in the midst of you in five minutes."

" Look to yourselves without," replied the stout-hearted Sir Henry ; " we will pour our shot upon you, if you attempt the least violence."

But, alas ! while he assumed this bold language, his whole garrison consisted of two poor terrified women ; for his son, in conformity with the plan which they had fixed upon, had withdrawn from the hall into the secret recesses of the palace.

" What can they be doing now, sir?" said Phœbe, hearing a noise as it were of a carpenter turning screw-nails, mixed with a low buzz of men talking.

" They are fixing a petard," said the knight, with great composure. " I have noted thee for a clever wench, Phœbe, and I will explain it to thee : 'Tis a metal pot, shaped much like one of the roguish knaves' own sugar-loaf hats, supposing it had narrower brims—it is charged with some few pounds of fine gunpowder. Then "——

" Gracious ! we shall be all blown up ! " exclaimed Phœbe,—the word gunpowder being the only one which she understood in the knight's description.

" Not a bit, foolish girl. Pack old Dame Jellicot into the embrasure of yonder window," said the knight, " on that side of the door, and we will ensconce ourselves on this, and we shall time to time have finish my explanation, for *they have bungling engineers. We had a clever French fellow at Newark would have done the job in the firing of a pistol.*"

*They had scarce got into the place of security when the knight proceeded with his description,—*" The petard



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as I tell you, is  
plank termed the  
led, or rather se  
out thou mindest  
an I, Sir Henry,"  
ing as you speak of  
terror—we shall b  
ites!"

are secure from t  
gravely, "which wil  
ion into the middle of  
ments that may fly  
ected by this deep emb  
"But they will slay  
Phoebe.

"They will give thee  
Henry; "and if I do n  
that rogue engineer, it is  
penalty inflicted by mart  
edge of the sword all pe  
untenable post. Not th  
could reach Dame Jellic  
that you carry no arm  
might indeed have do  
birding-piece."

Phoebe might have  
day, as more allied to  
which her young lad  
agony of inexpressi  
knight's account of  
trophe, of what nat  
withstanding his

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rabbit—if he had been here, never may I stir b  
would have countermined them ere now, and

——Tis sport to have the engineer  
Hoist with his own petard.

as our immortal Shakspeare has it."

"O Lord, the poor mad old gentleman," the  
Phoebe—"O sir, had you not better leave alone  
books, and think of your end?" uttered she also  
sheer terror and vexation of spirit.

"If I had not made up my mind to that many  
since," answered the knight, "I had not now me  
hour with a free bosom—

As gentle and as jocund as to rest,  
Go I to death—truth hath a quiet breast."

As he spoke, a broad glare of light flashed from  
out, through the windows of the hall, and betwix  
strong iron stanchions with which they were secure  
broad discoloured light it was, which shed a red  
dusky illumination on the old armour and weapon  
if it had been the reflection of a conflagration. Phoebe  
screamed aloud, and, forgetful of reverence in  
moment of passion, clung close to the knight's  
and arm, while Dame Jellicot, from her solitary  
having the use of her eyes, though bereft of  
hearing, yelled like an owl when the moon breaks  
suddenly

"Take care, good Phoebe," said the knight; "I  
will prevent my using my weapon if you hang upon  
thus.—The bungling fools cannot fix their petard  
out the use of torches! Now let me take the advantage  
*of this interval.*—Remember what I told thee, and  
*to put off time.*"

"O Lord—ay, sir," said Phoebe, "I will say  
*thing.* O Lord, that it were but over!—Ah! "  
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ged screams)—“I hear something hissing  
nt.”

“fusee, as we martialists call it,” replied the  
that is, Phoebe, the match which fires the  
d which is longer or shorter, according to the

The knight's discourse was cut short by a dreadful  
which, as he had foretold, shattered the door,  
it was, to pieces, and brought down the glass  
from the windows with all the painted heroes  
sines, who had been recorded on that fragile  
memory for centuries. The women shrieked  
tly, and were answered by the bellowing of  
though shut up at a distance from the scene  
on. The knight, shaking Phoebe from him  
difficulty, advanced into the hall to meet those  
ashed in, with torches lighted and weapons pre-

death to all who resist—life to those who sur-  
!“ exclaimed Cromwell, stamping with his foot.  
o commands this garrison?”

“Sir Henry Lee of Ditchley,” answered the old knight,  
ng forward; “who, having no other garrison than  
weak women, is compelled to submit to what he  
willingly have resisted.”

“Isarm the inveterate and malignant rebel,” cried  
“Art thou not ashamed, sir, to detain me  
the door of a house which you had no force to  
l? Wearest thou so white a beard, and knowest  
not, that to refuse surrendering an indefensible  
by the martial law deserves hanging?”

“My beard and I,” said Sir Henry, “have settled  
matter between us, and agree right cordially. I  
er to run the risk of being hanged like some  
han to give up our trust like cowards  
.”

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"Ha! say'st thou?" said Cromwell; "thou powerful motives, I doubt not, for running thy head a noose. But I will speak with thee by and by. Pearson, Gilbert Pearson, take this scroll—Take elder woman with thee—Let her guide you to various places therein mentioned—Search every therein set down, and arrest, or slay upon the slightest resistance, whomsoever you find there. Then note places marked as commanding points for cutting intercourse through the mansion—the landing-place, the great staircase, the great gallery, and so forth. Take the woman civilly. The plan annexed to the scroll point out the posts, even if she prove stupid and refractory. Meanwhile, the corporal, with a party bring the old man and the girl there to some apartment—the parlour, I think, called Victor Lee's, will do as another.—We will then be out of this stifling air of gunpowder."

So saying, and without requiring any farther assistance or guidance, he walked towards the apartment he named. Sir Henry had his own feelings, when he saw the unhesitating decision with which the General went his way, and which seemed to intimate a more complete acquaintance with the various localities of Woodstock was consistent with his own present design, to enter the Commonwealth party in a fruitless search through the intricacies of the Lodge.

"I will now ask thee a few questions, old man," said the General, when they had arrived in the room; "I warn thee, that hope of pardon for thy many and severing efforts against the Commonwealth, can be otherwise merited than by the most direct answers to the questions I am about to ask."

Sir Henry bowed. He would have spoken, but his temper rising high, and became afraid it might be exhausted before the part he had settled to play.

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King time for his escape, should be brought

household have you had here, Sir Henry Lee, few days—what guests—what visitors? We our means of housekeeping are not so poor, so the catalogue cannot be burdensome to you."

"It," replied the knight, with unusual composure; "my daughter, and latterly my son, my guests; and I have had these females, and Joliffe, to attend upon us."

"I ask after the regular members of your household after those who have been within your walls as guests, or as malignant fugitives taking

refuge here, may have been more of both kinds, sir, than I, by your valour, am able to answer for," replied the knight. "I remember my kinsman Everard this morning—Also, I bethink me, a follower of Sir Mordaunt's."

"May I not also receive a young cavalier, called Sir Guy?" said Cromwell.

"I never hear of no such name, were I to hang for it," replied the knight.

"I have heard of it, or some such word," said the General; "it may be a quarrel for a sound."

"I had, called Louis Kerneguy, was a guest here, and left me this morning for

"What," exclaimed Cromwell, stamping with his foot, "fate contrives to baffle us, even when she seems favourable!—What direction did he take, old man?" asked Cromwell—"What horse did he ride with him?"

"He went with him," replied the knight; "he was the son of a Scottish lord.—I pray



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you, sir, to be finished with these questions ; for although I owe thee, as Will Shakespeare says,

Respect for thy great place, and let the devil  
Be sometimes honoured for his burning throne,—

yet I feel my patience wearing thin."

Cromwell here whispered to the corporal, who in turn uttered orders to two soldiers, who left the room.

"Place the knight aside ; we will now examine the servant damsel," said the General.—"Dost thou know," said he to Phoebe, "of the presence of one Louis Kerneneguy, calling himself a Scotch page, who came here a few days since?"

"Surely, sir," she replied, "I cannot easily forget him ; and I warrant no well-looking wench that comes into his way will be like to forget him either."

"Aha," said Cromwell, "say'st thou so? truly I believe the woman will prover the truer witness.—When did he leave this house?"

"Nay, I know nothing of his movements, not I," said Phoebe ; "I am only glad to keep out of his way. But if he have actually gone hence, I am sure he was here some two hours since, for he crossed me in the lower passage, between the hall and the kitchen."

"How did you know it was he?" demanded Cromwell.

"By a rude enough token," said Phoebe.—"La, sir, you do ask such questions!" she added, hanging down her head.

Humgudgeon here interfered, taking upon himself the freedom of a coadjutor. "Verily," he said, "if what the damsel is called to speak upon hath aught unseemly, *I crave your Excellency's permission to withdraw, not desiring that my nightly meditations may be disturbed with tales of such a nature.*"

"Nay, your honour," said Phoebe, "I scorn the old man's words, in the way of seemliness or unseemliness

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"Louis did but snatch a kiss, that is the  
must be told."

gudgeon groaned deeply, while his Excel-  
lent laughing with some difficulty. "Thou  
excellent tokens, Phoebe," he said; "and if  
æ, as I think they seem to be, thou shalt not  
reward.—And here comes our spy from the

ere are not the least signs," said the trooper,  
horses have been in the stables for a month—  
is no litter in the stalls, no hay in the racks, the corn-  
ns are empty, and the mangers are full of cobwebs."

"Ay, ay," said the old knight, "I have seen when I  
ept twenty good horses in these stalls, with many a  
groom and stable-boy to attend them."

"In the meanwhile," said Cromwell, "their present  
state tells little for the truth of your own story, that there  
were horses to-day, on which this Kerneguy and your  
son fled from justice."

"I did not say that the horses were kept there," said  
the knight. "I have horses and stables elsewhere."

"Fie, fie, for shame, for shame!" said the General;  
"can a white-bearded man, I ask it once more, be a  
false witness?"

"Faith, sir," said Sir Henry Lee, "it is a thriving  
trade, and I wonder not that you who live on it are so  
severe in prosecuting interlopers. But it is the times,  
and those who rule the times, that make grey-beards  
deceivers."

"Thou art facetious, friend, as well as daring, in thy  
malignancy," said Cromwell; "but credit me, I will cry  
quittance with you ere I am done. Whereunto lead  
these doors?"

"To bedrooms," answered the knight.

"Bedrooms! only to bedrooms?" said the Republic-  
General, in a voice which indicated such was the inte-

it so strange? I say these doors lead to better places where honest men sleep, and rogues lie awake.

"You are running up a farther account, Sir," said the General; "but we will balance it off for all."

During the whole of the scene, Cromwell, notwithstanding the internal uncertainty of his mind, maintained the most strict temperance in language and manner as if he had no farther interest in what was passing than as a military man employed in discharging the duty joined him by his superiors. But the restraint upon his passion was but

The torrent's smoothness ere it dash below.

The course of his resolution was hurried on even more forcibly, because no violence of expression attended it. He threw himself into the water with a countenance that indicated no indecision, but a determination which awaited only the signal for action. Meanwhile the knight, as if resolved in advance to forego the privileges of his rank and place, took off his sword, and putting on his hat, which he held in his hand, regarded the General with a calm look of indifference. The soldiers stood around, some holding the torches, which illuminated the apartment with a bright and sombre glare of light, the others resting upon their weapons. Phoebe, with her hands folded, stood with her head turned upwards till the pupils were scarce visible, every shade of colour banished from her ruddy face. *He stood like one in immediate apprehension of the stroke of death being pronounced, and instant execution followed.*

Heavy steps were at last heard, and Pearson

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iers returned. This seemed to be what Crom-  
d for. He started up, and asked hastily,  
ws, Pearson? any prisoners—any malignants  
y defence?"

so please your Excellency," answered the officer.

are thy sentinels all carefully placed, as  
scroll gave direction, and with fitting orders?"  
the most deliberate care," said Pearson.

thou very sure," said Cromwell, pulling him a  
ne side, "that this is all well and duly cared  
hink thee, that when we engage ourselves in the  
ommunications, all will be lost should the party  
or have the means of dodging us by an escape  
more open rooms, and from thence perhaps into  
."

Lord-General," answered Pearson, "if placing  
ds on the places pointed out in this scroll be  
, with the strictest orders to stop, and, if  
, to stab, or shoot, whoever crosses their post,  
ers are given to men who will not fail to exe-  
n. If more is necessary, your Excellency has  
peak."

-no—no, Pearson," said the General, "thou  
: well.—This night over, and let it end but as  
thy reward shall not be wanting.—And now to  
—Sir Henry Lee, undo me the secret spring of  
icture of your ancestor. Nay, spare yourself  
le and guilt of falsehood or equivocation, and,  
do me that spring presently."

n I acknowledge you for my master, and wear  
y, I may obey your commands," answered the  
"even then I would need first to understand

ch," said Cromwell, addressing Phoebe, "go  
the spring—you could do it fast enough when  
at the gambols of the demons of Woodstock.

## WOODSTOCK.

and terrified even Mark Everard, who, I judged, had more sense."

"O Lord, sir, what shall I do?" said Phoebe, looking to the knight; "they know all about it. What shall I do?"

"For thy life, hold out to the last, wench! Every minute is worth a million."

"Ha! heard you that, Pearson?" said Cromwell to the officer; then, stamping with his foot, he added, "Undo the spring, or I will else use levers and wrenching irons—Or, ha! another petard were well bestowed—Call the engineer."

"O Lord, sir," cried Phoebe, "I shall never live another peter—I will open the spring."

"Do as thou wilt," said Sir Henry; "it shall profit them but little."

Whether from real agitation, or from a desire to gain time, Phoebe was some minutes ere she could get the spring to open; it was indeed secured with art, and the machinery on which it acted was concealed in the frame of the portrait. The whole, when fastened, appeared quite motionless, and betrayed, as when examined by Colonel Everard, no external mark of its being possible to remove it. It was now withdrawn, however, and showed a narrow recess, with steps which ascended on one side into the thickness of the wall. Cromwell was now like a greyhound slipped from the leash with the prey in full view.—"Up," he cried, "Pearson, thou art swifter than I—Up thou next, corporal." With more agility than could have been expected from his person or years, which were past the meridian of life, and exclaiming, "Before, those with the torches!" he followed the party, like an eager huntsman in the rear of his hounds, to encourage at once and direct them, as they penetrated into the labyrinth described by Dr. Rochecliffe in the "*Wonders of Woodstock.*"

*King, therefore, for his defence  
Against the furious Queen,  
At Woodstock builded such a bower,  
As never yet was seen.*

*Most curiously that bower was built,  
Of stone and timber strong;*

*An hundred and fifty doors*

*Did to this bower belong;*

*And they so cunningly contrived,*

*With turnings round about,*

*That none but with a clew of thread  
Could enter in or out.*

#### BALLAD OF FAIR ROSAMOND.

**T**HE tradition of the country, as well as some historical evidence, confirmed the opinion that there existed, within the old Royal Lodge at Woodstock, a labyrinth, or connected series of subterranean passages, built chiefly by Henry II., for the security of his mistress, Rosamond Clifford, from the jealousy of his Queen, the celebrated Eleanor. Dr. Rochecliffe, indeed, in one of those fits of contradiction with which antiquaries are sometimes seized, was bold enough to dispute the alleged purpose of the perplexed mass of rooms and passages, with which the walls of the ancient palace were perforated; but the fact was undeniable, that in raising the fabric some Norman architect had exerted the utmost of the complicated art, which they have often shown elsewhere, in creating secret passages, and chambers of retreat and concealment. There were stairs, which were ascended merely, as it seemed, for the purpose of descending again—passages which, after turning and winding for a considerable way, returned to the place where they set out—there were trap-doors and hatchways, panels and portcullises. Although

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Oliver was assisted by a sort of ground-plan map and transmitted by Joseph Tomkins, whose former employment in Dr Rochecliffe's service had made him fully acquainted with the place, it was found impossible, moreover, the most serious obstacles to their progress occurred in the shape of strong doors, party-walls and iron-grates—so that the party blundered on in the dark, uncertain whether they were not going far from, rather than approaching, the extremity of the labyrinth. They were obliged to send for mechanics with sledge-hammers and other instruments, to force open two of those doors, which resisted all other means of undoing them. Labouring along in these dusky passages, where, from time to time, they were like to be choked by the dust which their acts of violence excited, the soldiers were obliged to be relieved oftener than once, and the bulky Corporal Grace-be-here himself puffed and blew like a grampus that has got into water. Cromwell alone continued, with unabated vigour, to push on his researches—to encourage the soldiers by the exhortations which they best understood, against fainting for lack of faith—and to secure, by sentinels in proper places, possession of the ground which they had already explored. His acute and observing eye detected with a sneering smile, the cordage and machinery which the bed of poor Desborough had been invested with, and several remains of the various disguises, as well as the private modes of access, by which Desborough, Bleby and Harrison, had been previously imposed upon. He pointed them out to Pearson, with no farther comment than was applied in the exclamation, "The silly fools!"

*But his assistants began to lose heart and be discouraged, and required all his spirit to raise them. He then called their attention to voices which they were to hear before them, and urged these as evidence that*

... or the devils of Woods  
all the while decoying them forward  
in the Palace, where the floor, re-  
precipitated those who entered into a b  
Jungudgeon hinted, that he had cons  
that morning by way of lot, and his  
to alight on the passage, "Eutychus f  
third loft." The energy and auth  
however, and the refreshment of so  
g waters, reconciled them to pursuin  
vertheless, with all their unwearied exc  
lawned on the search before they re  
xcliffe's sitting apartment, into which,  
tained entrance by a mode much more  
that which the Doctor himself empl  
eir ingenuity was long at fault. Fro  
is articles that were strewed around  
tions made for food and lodging, it se  
ined the very citadel of the



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with the pommel of his sword almost every stone in the building, and every plank on the floor, the General gave orders to bring the old knight and Dr. Rochecliffe to the spot, trusting that he might work out of them some explanation of the secrets of this apartment.

"So please your Excellency, to let me to deal with them," said Pearson, who was a true soldier of fortune, and had been a buccanier in the West Indies, "I think that, by a whipcord twitched tight round their forehead, and twisted about with a pistol-butt, I could make either the truth start from their lips, or the eyes from their head."

"Out upon thee, Pearson!" said Cromwell, with abhorrence; "we have no warrant for such cruelty, neither as Englishmen nor Christians. We may slay malignants as we crush noxious animals, but to torture them is a deadly sin; for it is written, 'He made them to be pitied of those who carried them captive.' Nay, I recall the order even for their examination, trusting that wisdom will be granted us without it, to discover their most secret devices."

There was a pause accordingly, during which an idea seized upon Cromwell's imagination — "Bring me hither," he said, "yonder stool;" and placing it beneath one of the windows, of which there were two so high in the wall as not to be accessible from the floor, he clambered up into the entrance of the window, which was six or seven feet deep, corresponding with the thickness of the wall. "Come up, hither, Pearson," said the General; "but ere thou comest, double the guard at the foot of the turret called Love's Ladder, and *bid them* bring up the other petard—So now, come thou hither."

*The inferior officer, however brave in the field, was one of those whom a great height strikes with giddiness and sickness. He shrunk back from the view of the pre-*

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on the verge of which Cromwell was standing with indifference, till the General, catching the hand of the follower, pulled him forward as far as he would go. "I think," said the General, "I have found it, but by this light it is no easy one! See you, and in the portal near the top of Rosamond's Tower; yonder turret, which rises opposite to our feet, is that which is called Love's Ladder, from which the draw-bridge reached that admitted the profligate Norman knight to the bower of his mistress."

"True, my lord, but the drawbridge is gone," said Pearson.

"Ay, Pearson," replied the General; "but an active man might spring from the spot we stand upon to the battlements of yonder turret."

"I do not think so, my lord," said Pearson.

"What?" said Cromwell; "not if the avenger of blood were behind you, with his slaughter-weapon in his hand?"

"The fear of instant death might do much," answered Pearson; "but when I look at that sheer depth on either side, and at the empty chasm between us and yonder turret, which is, I warrant you, twelve feet distant, I confess the truth, nothing short of the most imminent danger should induce me to try. Pah—the thought makes my head grow giddy!—I tremble to see your Highness stand there, balancing yourself as if you meditated a spring into the empty air. I repeat, I would scarce stand so near the verge as does your Highness for the rescue of my life."

"Ah, base and degenerate spirit!" said the General; "soul of mud and clay, wouldst thou not do it, and much more, for the possession of empire!—that is, peradventure," continued he, changing his tone as one who has said too much, "shouldst thou be called on to do this, that thereby becoming a great man in the tribes of Israel"

of Jerusalem—ay,  
work for the afflicted

calls," said the officer;  
Gilbert Pearson, your  
jest of me yesterday,  
language; and I am no  
than to use your mode

nowell, "thou hast thine,  
Highness."  
not sensible of it. I owe

r.  
ere was no offi  
ay perchance sta  
for a simple so  
my husbandry.  
the Supreme wil  
e in that worth  
to our British Is  
excellency, maki  
will not give o'  
of Westminster  
ot, and who are i

our lordship que  
arson. "But it  
e even now, unt  
?"

o jot of time,"  
unication of Lo  
below as I take it for ahr  
"I have driven fro  
at length

there is no re  
"There is  
said Pearson  
the tower, if  
whole turret  
air?"

"Ah, silly  
liarly on the  
telling me, it  
summon the tu  
will serve our  
summons there  
The trumpe  
hoed from e

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chosen for his security will prove a rat-trap, from whence there is no returning."

"There is a cask of gunpowder in this cabinet," said Pearson; "were it not better, my lord, to mine the tower, if he will not render himself, and send the whole turret with its contents one hundred feet into the air?"

"Ah, silly man," said Cromwell, striking him familiarly on the shoulder; "if thou hadst done this without telling me, it had been good service. But we will first summon the turret, and then think whether the petard will serve our turn—it is but mining at last.—Blow a summons there, down below."

The trumpets rang at his bidding, till the old walls echoed from every recess and vaulted archway. Cromwell, as if he cared not to look upon the person whom he expected to appear, drew back, like a necromancer afraid of the spectre which he has evoked.

"He has come to the battlement," said Pearson to his General.

"In what dress or appearance?" answered Cromwell from within the chamber.

"A grey riding-suit, passmented with silver, russet walking-boots, a cut band, a grey hat and plume, black hair."

"It is he, it is he!" said Cromwell; "and another crowning mercy is vouchsafed!"

Meantime, Pearson and young Lee exchanged defiance from their respective posts.

"Surrender," said the former, "or we blow you up in your fastness."

"I am come of too high a race to surrender to rebels," said Albert, assuming the air with which, in such a condition, a king might have spoken.

"I bear you to witness," cried Cromwell, exultingly, "he hath refused quarter. Of a surety his blood be"  
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Gilbert Pe  
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Pearson  
reports  
or of gr

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arrow stair ; and they could see there  
f the same kind some ten feet higher.  
nce, while a desperate and well-armed  
ntage of the steps above them, might  
'Which, lack-a-day," said the General,  
be tender of. What dost thou advise,

powder, my lord," answered Pearson,  
r was too modest to reserve to himself  
of the proceeding—"There may be a  
d conveniently formed under the foot  
have a sausage, by good luck, to form  
'\_\_\_\_\_

romwell, "I know thou canst manage  
ut, Gilbert, I go to visit the posts, and  
to retire to a safe distance when the  
l. You will allow them five minutes

igh for any knave of them all," said  
will be lame indeed, that require more  
—I ask but one, though I fire the train

said Cromwell, "that the poor soul be  
sks quarter. It may be he may repent  
artedness, and call for mercy."

ie shall have," — answered Pearson,  
ls loud enough to make me hear him ;  
of that damned petard has made me  
il's dam."

, hush !" said Cromwell ; "you offend  
"

must speak either in your way or in  
earson, "unless I am to be dumb as  
way with you, my lord, to visit the  
ill presently hear me make some noise

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Cromwell smiled gently at his aid-de-camp's petulance, patted him on the shoulder, and called him a mad fellow, walked a little way, then turned back to whisper, "What thou dost, do quickly;" then returned again towards the outer circle of guards, turning his head from time to time, as if to assure himself that the corporal to whom he had intrusted the duty, still kept guard with his advanced weapon upon the terrific chasm between Rosamond's Tower and the corresponding turret. Seeing him standing on his post, the General muttered between his moustaches, "The fellow hath the trength and courage of a bear; and yonder is a post swhere one shall do more to keep back than an hundred in making way." He cast a last look on the gigantic figure who stood in that airy position, like some Gothic statue, the weapon half levelled against the opposite turret, with the butt rested against his right foot, his steel cap and burnished corselet glittering in the rising sun.

Cromwell then passed on to give the necessary orders, that such sentinels as might be endangered at their present posts by the effect of the mine, should withdraw at the sound of the trumpet to the places which he pointed out to them. Never, on any occasion of his life, did he display more calmness and presence of mind. He was kind, nay, facetious with the soldiers, who adored him; and yet he resembled a volcano before the eruption commences—all peaceful and quiet without, while a hundred contradictory passions were raging in his bosom.

Corporal Humgudgeon, meanwhile, remained steady upon his post; yet, though as determined a soldier as *ever fought among the redoubted regiment of Ironsides, and possessed of no small share of that exalted fanaticism which lent so keen an edge to the natural courage of those stern religionists*, the veteran felt his present

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situation to be highly uncomfortable. Within a pike's length of him arose a turret, which was about to be dispersed in massive fragments through the air; and he felt small confidence in the length of time which might be allowed for his escape from such a dangerous vicinity. The duty of constant vigilance upon his post was partly divided by this natural feeling, which induced him from time to time to bend his eyes on the miners below, instead of keeping them rivetted on the opposite turret.

At length the interest of the scene arose to the uttermost. After entering and returning from the turret, and coming out again more than once, in the course of about twenty minutes Pearson issued, as it might be supposed for the last time, carrying in his hand, and uncoiling, as he went along, the sausage or linen bag (so called from its appearance), which, strongly sewed together, and crammed with gunpowder, was to serve as a train betwixt the mine to be sprung, and the point occupied by the engineer who was to give fire. He was in the act of finally adjusting it, when the attention of the corporal on the tower became irresistibly and exclusively rivetted upon the preparations for the explosion. But while he watched the aid-de-camp drawing his pistol to give fire, and the trumpeter handling his instrument, as waiting the order to sound the retreat, fate rushed on the unhappy sentinel in a way he least expected.

Young, active, bold, and completely possessed of his presence of mind, Albert Lee, who had been from the loopholes a watchful observer of every measure which had been taken by his besiegers, had resolved to make one desperate effort for self-preservation. While the head of the sentinel on the opposite platform was turned from him, and bent rather downwards, he suddenly *sprung across the chasm*, though the space on which *he lighted* was scarce wide enough for two persons.



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threw the surprised soldier from his precarious stand, and jumped himself down into the chamber. The gigantic trooper went sheer down twenty feet, struck against a projecting battlement, which launched the wretched man outwards, and then fell on the earth with such tremendous force, that the head, which first touched the ground, dented a hole in the soil of six inches in depth, and was crushed like an eggshell. Scarce knowing what had happened, yet startled and confounded at the descent of this heavy body, which fell at no great distance from him, Pearson snapped his pistol at the train, no previous warning given ; the powder caught, and the mine exploded. Had it been strongly charged with powder, many of those without might have suffered ; but the explosion was only powerful enough to blow out in a lateral direction a part of the wall just above the foundation, sufficient, however, to destroy the equipoise of the building. Then amid a cloud of smoke, which gradually began to encircle the turret like a shroud, arising slowly from its base to its summit, it was seen to stagger and shake by all who had courage to look steadily at a sight so dreadful. Slowly, at first, the building inclined outwards, then rushed precipitately to its base, and fell to the ground in huge fragments, the strength of its resistance showing the excellence of the mason work. The engineer, so soon as he had fired the train, fled in such alarm, that he well-nigh ran against his General, who was advancing towards him, while a huge stone from the summit of the building, flying farther than the rest, lighted within a yard of them.

*"Thou hast been over hasty, Pearson," said Cromwell, with the greatest composure possible—"hath no one fallen in that same tower of Siloe?"*

*"Some one fell," said Pearson, still in great agitation, "and yonder lies his body half-buried in the rubbish."*

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dark and resolute step Cromwell approached, exclaimed, "Pearson, thou hast ruined me, Man hath escaped.—This is our own sentinel and the idiot! Let him rot beneath the ruins shed him!"

now resounded from the platform of Rosa-Tower, which appeared yet taller than formerly, and of the neighbouring turret, which emulated it did not attain to its height.—"A prisoner. General—a prisoner—the fox whom we have held all night is now in the snare—the Lord hath delivered him into the hand of his servants."

"Look you keep him in safe custody," exclaimed Cromwell, "and bring him presently down to the apartment from which the secret passages have their principal entrance."

"Your Excellency shall be obeyed."

The proceedings of Albert Lee, to which these exclamations related, had been unfortunate. He had dashed from the platform, as we have related, the gigantic strength of the soldier opposed to him, and had instantly jumped down into Rochecliffe's chamber. But the soldiers stationed there threw themselves upon him, and after a struggle, which was hopelessly maintained against such advantage of numbers, had thrown the young cavalier to the ground, two of them, drawn down by his strenuous exertions, falling across him. At the same moment a sharp and severe report was heard, which, like a clap of thunder in the immediate vicinity, shook all around them, till the strong and solid tower tottered like the masts of a stately vessel when about to part by the board. In a few seconds, this was followed by another sullen sound, at first low, and deep, but augmenting like the roar of a cataract, as it descends, reeling, bellowing, and rushing, as if to astound both heaven and earth. So awful, indeed, was the sound of the neighbour tower as it fell.

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that both the captive and those who struggled with him, continued for a minute or two passive in each other's grasp.

Albert was the first who recovered consciousness and activity. He shook off those who lay above him, and made a desperate effort to gain his feet, in which he partly succeeded. But as he had to deal with men accustomed to every species of danger, and whose energies were recovered nearly as soon as his own, he was completely secured, and his arms held down. Loyal and faithful to his trust, and resolved to sustain to the last the character which he had assumed, he exclaimed, as his struggles were finally overpowered, "Rebel villains! would you slay your king?"

"Ha, heard you that?" cried one of the soldiers to the lance-prisade who commanded the party. "Shall I not strike this son of a wicked father under the fifth rib, even as the tyrant of Moab was smitten by Ehud with a dagger of a cubit's length?"

But Robins answered, "Be it far from us, Merciful Strickalthrow, to slay in cold blood the captive of our bow and of our spear. Methinks, since the storm of Drogheda, we have shed enough of blood—therefore, on your lives do him no evil; but take from him his arms, and let us bring him before the chosen Instrument, even our General, that he may do with him what is meet in his eyes."

By this time the soldier, whose exultation had made him the first to communicate the intelligence from the battlements to Cromwell, returned, and brought commands corresponding to the orders of their temporary officer, and Albert Lee, disarmed and bound, was conducted as a captive into the apartment which derived its name from the victories of his ancestor, and placed in the presence of General Cromwell.

*Running over in his mind the time which had elapsed*

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arture of Charles till the siege, if it may be  
d terminated in his own capture, Albert had  
to hope that his Royal Master must have had  
omplish his escape. Yet he determined to  
o the last a deceit which might for a time insure  
; safety. The difference betwixt them could  
ught, be instantly discovered, begrimed as he  
dust and smoke, and with blood issuing from  
atches received in the scuffle.

is evil plight, but bearing himself with such  
as was adapted to the princely character, Albert  
hered into the apartment of Victor Lee, where, in  
ther's own chair, reclined the triumphant enemy of  
cause to which the house of Lee had been here-  
arily faithful.

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## CHAP. XXXV.

*A barren title hast thou bought too dear,  
Why didst thou tell me that thou wert a king?*

HENRY IV. Part I.



LIVER CROMWELL arose from his seat as  
the two veteran soldiers, Zerubbabel Robins and  
Merciful Strickalthrow, introduced into the  
apartment the prisoner, whom they held by the arms,  
and fixed his stern hazel eye on Albert long before he  
could give vent to the ideas which were swelling in his  
bosom. Exultation was the most predominant.

"Art not thou," he at length said, "that Egyptian  
which, before these days, madest an uproar, and leddest  
out into the wilderness many thousand men, who were  
murderers?—Ha, youth, I have hunted thee from Stirling  
to Worcester, from Worcester to Woodstock, and we  
have met at last!"

"I would," replied Albert, speaking in the character  
which he had assumed, "that we had met where I could

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have shown thee the difference betwixt a rightful King and an ambitious Usurper !”

“Go to, young man,” said Cromwell ; “say rather the difference between a judge raised up for the redemption of England, and the son of those Kings whom the Lord in his anger permitted to reign over her. But we will not waste useless words. God knows that it is not of our will that we are called to such high matters, being as humble in our thoughts as we are of ourselves ; and in our unassisted nature frail and foolish ; and unable to render a reason but for the better spirit within us, which is not of us.—Thou art weary, young man, and thy nature requires rest and refection, being doubtless dealt with delicately, as one who hath fed on the fat, and drunk of the sweet, and who hath been clothed in purple and fine linen.”

Here the General suddenly stopped, and then abruptly exclaimed—“But is this—Ah ! whom have we here ? These are not the locks of the swarthy lad Charles Stuart ?—A cheat ! a cheat !”

Albert hastily cast his eyes on a mirror which stood in the room, and perceived that a dark peruke, found among Dr. Rochecliffe's miscellaneous wardrobe, had been disordered in the scuffle with the soldiery, and that his own light-brown hair was escaping from beneath it.

“Who is this ?” said Cromwell, stamping with fury. —“Pluck the disguise from him.”

The soldiers did so ; and bringing him at the same time towards the light, the deception could not be maintained for a moment longer with any possibility of success. Cromwell came up to him with his teeth set, and grinding against each other as he spoke, his hands *clenched, and trembling* with emotion, and speaking *with a voice low-pitched, bitterly and deeply emphatic, such as might have preceded a stab with his dagger.*

“Thy name, young man ?”

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tered calmly and firmly, while the coun-  
: speaker wore a cast of triumph, and even

Lee of Ditchley, a faithful subject of King

ght have guessed it," said Cromwell.—"Ay,  
ing Charles shalt thou go as soon as it is noon  
dial—Pearson," he continued, "let him be  
to the others; and let them be executed at  
: exactly."

All, sir?" said Pearson, surprised, for Cromwell,  
gh he at times made formidable examples, was, in  
eral, by no means sanguinary.

"*All*"—repeated Cromwell, fixing his eye on young  
e. "Yes, young sir, your conduct has devoted to  
ath thy father, thy kinsman, and the stranger that was  
thine household. Such wreck hast thou brought on  
hy father's house."

"My father, too—my aged father!" said Albert, look-  
ing upward, and endeavouring to raise his hands in the  
same direction, which was prevented by his bonds.  
"The Lord's will be done!"

"All this havoc can be saved, if," said the General,  
"thou wilt answer one question—Where is the young  
Charles Stuart, who was called King of Scotland?"

"Under Heaven's protection, and safe from thy power,"  
was the firm and unhesitating answer of the young royalist.

"Away with him to prison!" said Cromwell; "and  
from thence to execution with the rest of them, as malign-  
ants taken in the fact. Let a court-martial sit on them  
presently."

"One word," said young Lee, as they led him from  
the room.

"Stop, stop," said Cromwell, with the agitation of  
*renewed hope*—"let him be heard."

"You love texts of Scripture," said Albert—"Let this

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be the subject of your next homily—' Had Zimri peace, who slew his master ? ' "

" Away with him," said the General ; " let him die the death !—I have said it."

As Cromwell spoke these words, his aide-de-camp observed that he became unwontedly pale.

" Your Excellency is overtoiled in the public service," said Pearson ; " a course of the stag in the evening will refresh you. The old knight hath a noble hound here, if we can but get him to hunt without his master, which may be hard, as he is faithful, and "——

" Hang him up," said Cromwell.

" What—whom—hang the noble dog ? Your Excellency was wont to love a good hound ? "

" It matters not," said Cromwell ; " let him be killed. Is it not written, that they slew in the valley of Achor, not only the accursed Achan, with his sons and his daughters, but also his oxen and asses, and his sheep, and every live thing belonging unto him ? And even thus shall we do to the malignant family of Lee, who have aided Sisera in his flight, when Israel might have been delivered of his trouble for ever. But send out couriers and patrols—Follow, pursue, watch in every direction—Let my horse be ready at the door in five minutes, or bring me the first thou canst find."

It seemed to Pearson that this was something wildly spoken, and that the cold perspiration was standing upon the General's brow as he said it. He therefore again pressed the necessity of repose, and it would appear that nature seconded strongly the representation. Cromwell arose, and made a step or two towards the door of the apartment ; but stopped, staggered, and, *after a pause, sat down in a chair.* " Truly, friend Pearson," he said, " this weary carcass of ours is an impediment to us, even in our most necessary business, and am fitter to sleep than to watch, which is not my wont."

## WOODSTOCK.

Therefore, till we repose ourselves for an hour, I will send out in every direction, and spare not a man. Wake me if the court martial should be convened, and forget not to see the sentence executed on the Lees, and those who were concerned in the rebellion."

He spoke thus, he arose and half-opened a door, when Pearson again craved pardon for himself, and rightly understood his Excellency, that his associates were to be executed.

"Didst thou not say it?" answered Cromwell, dismissing him. "It is because thou art a man of blood, and that thou dost affect these scruples, to be under-hearted at my expense? I tell thee, thou shalt see one in the full tale of execution, thine own share may be the forfeit."

He entered the apartment, followed by the chamberlain, who attended upon Pearson's

When the General had retired, Pearson remained in his room, wondering what he ought to do; and that from no want of knowledge, but from uncertainty whether he should comply with the instructions he had received, either in postponing, or in too hastily and unhesitatingly executing, the instructions he had received.

At length, Strickalthrow and Robins had returned, bringing Albert in prison, to the room where Pearson was still musing on his General's commands. They were adjutators in their army, and old friends of Cromwell was accustomed to treat with civility; so that Robins had no hesitation to go to Pearson, "Whether he meant to execute the orders of the General, even to the letter?"

Pearson shook his head with an air of doubt, but he was in no choice left."

"I will," said the old man, "that if thou dost not comply, thou wilt cause Israel to sin, and that the



## WOODSTOCK.

General will not be pleased with your service. Thou knowest, and none better than thou, that Oliver, although he be like unto David the son of Jesse, in faith, and wisdom, and courage, yet there are times when the evil spirit cometh upon him as it did upon Saul, and he uttereth commands which he will not thank any one for executing."

Pearson was too good a politician to assent directly to a proposition which he could not deny—he only shook his head once more, and said that it was easy for those to talk who were not responsible, but the soldier's duty was to obey his orders, and not to judge of them.

"Very righteous truth," said Merciful Strickalthrow, a grim old Scotchman; "I marvel where our brother Zerubbabel caught up this softness of heart?"

"Why, I do but wish," said Zerubbabel, "that four or five human creatures may draw the breath of God's air for a few hours more; there can be small harm done by delaying the execution,—and the General will have some time for reflection."

"Ay," said Captain Pearson, "but I in my service must be more pointedly obsequious, than thou in thy plainness art bound to be, friend Zerubbabel."

"Then shall the coarse frieze cassock of the private soldier help the golden gaberdine of the captain to bear out the blast," said Zerubbabel. "Ay, indeed, I can show you warrant why we be aidful to each other in doing acts of kindness and long-suffering, seeing the best of us are poor sinful creatures, who might suffer, being called to a brief accounting."

"Of a verity you surprise me, brother Zerubbabel," said Strickalthrow; "that thou, being an old and experienced soldier, whose head hath grown grey in battle, *shouldst give such advice to a young officer. Is not the General's commission to take away the wicked from the land, and to root out the Amalekite, and the Jebusite, and the Perizzite, and the Hittite, and the Gergashite,*

## WOODSTOCK.

ite? and are not these men justly to be  
the five kings, who took shelter in the cave  
a, who were delivered into the hands of  
son of Nun? and he caused his captains and  
to come near and tread on their necks—and  
mote them, and he slew them, and then he  
nem on five trees, even till evening—And thou,  
Pearson by name, be not withheld from the duty  
is appointed to thee, but do even as has been  
anded by him who is raised up to judge and to  
ar Israel; for it is written, 'cursed is he who holdeth  
his sword from the slaughter.' "

Thus wrangled the two military theologians, while  
arson, much more solicitous to anticipate the wishes  
Oliver than to know the will of Heaven, listened to  
am with great indecision and perplexity.

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### CHAP. XXXVI.

*But let us now, like soldiers on the watch,  
Put the soul's armour on, alike prepared  
For all a soldier's warfare brings.*

JOANNA BAILLIE.

**T**HE reader will recollect, that when Rochecliffe and Joceline were made prisoners, the party which escorted them had two other captives in their train, Colonel Everard, namely, and the Rev. Nehemiah Holdenough. When Cromwell had obtained entrance into Woodstock, and commenced his search after the fugitive Prince, the prisoners were placed in what had been an old guard-room, and which was by its strength well calculated to serve for a prison, and a guard was placed over them by Pearson. No light was allowed, save that of a glimmering fire of charcoal. The prisoners remained separated from each other. Colonel

## WOODSTOCK.

Everard conversing with Nehemiah Holdenough, at a distance from Dr. Rochecliffe, Sir Henry Lee, and Joceline. The party was soon after augmented by Wildrake, who was brought down to the Lodge, and thrust in with so little ceremony, that, his arms being bound, he had very nearly fallen on his nose in the middle of the prison.

"I thank you, my good friends," he said, looking back to the door, which they who had pushed him in were securing—" *Point de cérémonie*—no apology for tumbling, so we light in good company.—Save ye, save ye, gentlemen all—What, *à la mort*, and nothing stirring to keep the spirits up, and make a night on't?—the last we shall have, I take it; for a make to a million, but we trine to the nubbing cheat to-morrow.—Patron, noble patron, how goes it? This was but a scurvy trick of Noll so far as you were concerned: as for me, why I might have deserved something of the kind at his hand."

"Prithee, Wildrake, sit down," said Everard; "thou art drunk—disturb us not."

"Drunk? I drunk?" cried Wildrake, "I have been splicing the main-brace, as Jack says at Wapping—have been tasting Noll's brandy in a bumper to the King's health, and another to his Excellency's confusion, and another to the d——n of Parliament—and it may be one or two more, but all to devilish good toasts. But I'm not drunk."

"Prithee, friend, be not profane," said Nehemiah Holdenough.

"What, my little Presbyterian Parson, my slender Mass-John? thou shalt say amen to this world instantly"—said Wildrake; "I have had a weary time in't for one.—*Ha, noble Sir Henry, I kiss your hand—I tell thee, knight, the point of my Toledo was near Cromwell's heart last night, as ever a button on the breast of his doublet. Rat him, he wears secret armour—He a*

## WOODSTOCK.

soldier ! Had it not been for a cursed steel shirt, I would have spitted him like a lark.—Ha, Doctor Rochcliffe !—thou knowest I can wield my weapon."

"Yes," replied the Doctor, "and you know I can use mine."

"I prithee be quiet, Master Wildrake," said Sir Henry.

"Nay, good knight," answered Wildrake, "be somewhat more cordial with a comrade in distress. This is a different scene from the Brentford storming-party. The jade Fortune has been a very stepmother to me. I will sing you a song I made on my own ill-luck."

"At this moment, Captain Wildrake, we are not in a fitting mood for singing," said Sir Henry, civilly and gravely.

"Nay, it will aid your devotions—Egad, it sounds like a penitential psalm.

When I was a young lad,  
My fortune was bad,  
If ere I do well 'tis a wonder.  
I spent all my means  
Amid sharpers and qucans ;  
Then I got a commission to plunder.  
I have stockings, 'tis true,  
But the devil a shoe,  
I am forced to wear boots in all weather,  
Be d——d the boot sole,  
Curse on the spur-roll,  
Confounded be the upper-leather."

The door opened as Wildrake finished this stanza at the top of his voice, and in rushed a sentinel, who, greeting him by the title of a "blasphemous bellowing bull of Bashan," bestowed a severe blow, with his ram-rod, on the shoulders of the songster, whose bonds permitted him no means of returning the compliment.

"Your humble servant again, sir," said Wildrake, shrugging his shoulders,—*"sorry I have no means of showing my gratitude. I am bound over to keep the peace, like Captain Bobadil—Ha, knight, did you hear*

# WOODSTOCK.

er? that blow came twangingly off—the  
flict the bastinado, were it in presence of  
rior—he has no taste for music, knight—  
d by the ‘concord of sweet sounds.’ I  
n fit for treason, stratagem, and spoil—  
in the mouth—well—I’ll go to sleep to-  
h, as I’ve done many a night, and I will  
hanged decently in the morning, which  
to me before in all my life—

When I was a young lad,  
My fortune was bad —

s not the tune it goes to.” Here he fell  
l sooner or later all his companions in-  
wed his example.

intended for the repose of the soldiers of  
ded the prisoners convenience enough to  
gh their slumbers, it may be believed,  
and nor undisturbed. But when daylight  
while broken, the explosion of gunpowder  
ce, and the subsequent fall of the turret  
ine was applied, would have awakened  
ers, or Morpheus himself. The smoke,  
ough the windows, left them at no less  
the din.

it my gunpowder,” said Rochcliffe,  
trust, blown up as many rebel villains  
been the means of destroying otherwise  
It must have caught fire by chance.”

—No,” said Sir Henry; “depend on it,  
has fired the train, and that in yonder  
was flying towards the heaven whose  
will never reach—Ah, my brave boy!  
ou art thyself sacrificed, like a youthful  
the rebellious Philistines.—But I will not

—Go long behind thee, Albert.”

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## WOODSTOCK.

Everard hastened to the door, hoping to obtain from the guard, to whom his name and rank might be known, some explanation of the noise, which seemed to announce some dreadful catastrophe.

But Nehemiah Holdenough, whose rest had been broken by the trumpet which gave signal for the explosion, appeared in the very acme of horror—"It is the trumpet of the Archangel!" he cried,—"*it is the crushing of this world of elements—it is the summons to the Judgment-seat! The dead are obeying the call—they are with us—they are amongst us—they arise in their bodily frames—they come to summon us!*"

As he spoke his eyes were rivetted upon Dr. Rochecliffe, who stood directly opposite to him. In rising hastily, the cap which he commonly wore, according to a custom then usual both among clergymen and gownmen of a civil profession, had escaped from his head, and carried with it the large silk patch which he probably wore for the purpose of disguise; for the cheek which was disclosed was unscarred, and the eye as good as that which was usually uncovered.

Colonel Everard, returning from the door, endeavoured in vain to make Master Holdenough comprehend what he learned from the guard without, that the explosion had involved only the death of one of Cromwell's soldiers. The Presbyterian divine continued to stare wildly at him of the Episcopal persuasion.

But Dr. Rochecliffe heard and understood the news brought by Colonel Everard, and, relieved from the instant anxiety which had kept him stationary, he advanced towards the retiring Calvinist, extending his hand in the most friendly manner.

"Avoid thee—Avoid thee!" said Holdenough, "*the living may not join hands with the dead.*"

"*But I,*" said Rochecliffe, "*am as much alive as you are.*"

## WOODSTOCK.

"Thou alive!—thou! Joseph Albany, whom my own eyes saw precipitated from the battlements of Clidesthrow Castle?"

"Ay," answered the Doctor, "but you did not see me swim ashore on a marsh covered with sedges—*fugit ad salices*—after a manner which I will explain to you another time."

Holdenough touched his hand with doubt and uncertainty. "Thou art indeed warm and alive," he said, "and yet, after so many blows, and a fall so tremendous—thou canst not be *my* Joseph Albany."

"I am Joseph Albany Rochecliffe," said the Doctor, "become so in virtue of my mother's little estate, which fines and confiscations have made an end of."

"And is it so indeed?" said Holdenough, "and have I recovered mine old chum?"

"Even so," replied Rochecliffe, "by the same token I appeared to you in the Mirror Chamber—Thou wert so bold, Nehemiah, that our whole scheme would have been shipwrecked, had I not appeared to thee in the shape of a departed friend. Yet, believe me, it went against my heart to do it."

"Ah, fie on thee, fie on thee!" said Holdenough, throwing himself into his arms, and clasping him to his bosom, "thou wert ever a naughty wag. How couldst thou play me such a trick?—Ah, Albany, dost thou remember Dr. Purefoy and Caius College?"

"Marry do I," said the Doctor, thrusting his arm through the Presbyterian divine's, and guiding him to a seat apart from the other prisoners, who witnessed this scene with much surprise. "Remember Caius College?" said Rochecliffe, "ay, and the good ale we drank, and *our parties to mother Huffcap's*."

"*Vanity of vanities*," said Holdenough, smiling kindly *at the same time*, and still holding his recovered friend's *arm* enclosed and hand-locked in his.

## WOODSTOCK.

; breaking the Principal's orchard, so cleanly  
1 the Doctor; "it was the first plot I ever  
1d much work I had to prevail on thee to go

name not that iniquity," said Nehemiah, "since  
well say, as the pious Master Baxter, that these  
offences have had their punishment in later years,  
such as that inordinate appetite for fruit hath pro-  
d stomachic affections under which I yet labour."

True, true, dear Nehemiah," said Rochecliffe, "but  
re not for them—a dram of brandy will correct it all.  
r. Baxter was,"—he was about to say, "an ass," but  
checked himself, and only filled up the sentence with "a  
good man, I dare say, but over scrupulous."

So they sat down together the best of friends, and for  
half-an-hour talked with mutual delight over old college  
stories. By degrees they got on the politics of the day;  
and though then they unclasped their hands, and there  
occurred between them such expressions as, "Nay, my  
dear brother," and, "there I must needs differ," and,  
"on this point I crave leave to think;" yet a hue and  
cry against the Independents and other sectarists being  
started, they followed like brethren in full hollo, and it  
was hard to guess which was most forward. Unhappily,  
in the course of this amicable intercourse, something  
was mentioned about the bishopric of Titus, which at  
once involved them in the doctrinal question of Church  
government. Then, alas! the floodgates were opened,  
and they showered on each other Greek and Hebrew  
texts, while their eyes kindled, their cheeks glowed, their  
hands became clenched, and they looked more like fierce  
polemics about to rend each other's eyes out, than  
Christian divines.

Roger Wildrake, by making himself an auditor of the  
debate, contrived to augment its violence. He took, of  
course, a most decided part in a question, the merits of



## WOODSTOCK.

which were totally unknown to him. Somewhat overawed by Holdenough's ready oratory and learning, the cavalier watched with a face of anxiety the countenance of Dr. Rochecliffe; but when he saw the proud eye and steady bearing of the Episcopal champion, and heard him answer Greek with Greek, and Hebrew with Hebrew, Wildrake backed his arguments as he closed them, with a stout rap upon the bench, and an exulting laugh in the face of the antagonist. It was with some difficulty that Sir Henry and Colonel Everard, having at length and reluctantly interfered, prevailed on the two alienated friends to adjourn their dispute, removing at the same time to a distance, and regarding each other with looks in which old friendship appeared to have totally given way to mutual animosity.

But while they sat lowering on each other, and longing to renew a contest in which each claimed the victory, Pearson entered the prison, and in a low and troubled voice desired the persons whom it contained to prepare for instant death.

Sir Henry Lee received the doom with the stern composure which he had hitherto displayed. Colonel Everard attempted the interposition of a strong and resentful appeal to the Parliament, against the judgment of the court-martial and the General. But Pearson declined to receive or transmit any such remonstrance, and with a dejected look and mien of melancholy presage, renewed his exhortation to them to prepare for the hour of noon and withdrew from the prison.

The operation of this intelligence on the two clerical disputants was more remarkable. They gazed for a moment on each other with eyes in which repented kindness and a feeling of generous shame quenched every lingering feeling of resentment, and joining in a mutual exclamation—"My brother—my brother, sinned, I have sinned in offending thee!" they

**T**HE hour appointed for execution had been long past, and it was about five in the evening, where the Protector summoned Pearson to his presence. He went with fear and reluctance, uncertain how he might be received. After remaining about a quarter of an hour, the aide-de-camp returned to Victor Lee's parlour, when he found the old soldier, Zerubbabel Robins, in attendance for his return.

"How is Oliver?" said the old man anxiously.

"Why, well," answered Pearson, "and hath asked no questions of the execution, but many concerning the reports we have been able to make regarding the flight of the young Man, and is much moved at thinking he must now be beyond pursuit. Also I gave him certain papers belonging to the malignant Doctor Rochecliffe."

"Then will I venture upon him," said the adjutator ;  
"so give me a napkin that I may look like a sewer,  
and fetch up the food which I directed should be in  
readiness."

## WOODSTOCK.

Two troopers attended accordingly with a ration of beef, such as was distributed to the private soldiers, and dressed after their fashion—a pewter pot of ale, a trencher with salt, black pepper, and a loaf of ammunition bread. "Come with me," he said to Pearson, "and fear not—Noll loves an innocent jest." He boldly entered the General's sleeping apartment, and said aloud, "Arise, thou that art called to be a judge in Israel—let there be no more folding of the hands to sleep. Lo, I come as a sign to thee ; wherefore arise, eat, drink, and let thy heart be glad within thee ; for thou shalt eat with joy the food of him that laboureth in the trenches, seeing that since thou wert commander over the host, the poor sentinel hath had such provisions as I have now placed for thine own refreshment."

"Truly, brother Zerubbabel," said Cromwell, accustomed to such starts of enthusiasm among his followers, "we would wish that it were so ; neither is it our ~~desire~~ to sleep soft, nor feed more highly than the meanest ~~that~~ ranks under our banners. Verily, thou hast chosen well for my refreshment, and the smell of the food is savoury in my nostrils."

He arose from the bed, on which he had lain down half dressed, and wrapping his cloak around him, sat down by the bedside, and partook heartily of the plain food which was prepared for him. While he was eating, Cromwell commanded Pearson to finish his report—"You need not desist for the presence of a worthy soldier, whose spirit is as my spirit."

"Nay, but," interrupted Robins, "you are to know that Gilbert Pearson hath not fully executed thy commands, touching a part of those malignants, all of whom *should have died at noon.*"

"*What execution—what malignants?*" said Cromwell, *laying down his knife and fork.*

"*Those in the prison here at Woodstock,*" answered



## WOODSTOCK.

ee in the longest kingly line in Europe,  
back to a successful soldier? I grudge  
ould be honoured and followed, because  
ndant of a victorious commander, while  
nd allegiance is paid to another, who, in  
ties, and in success, might emulate the  
is rival's dynasty. Well, Sir Henry Lee  
all live for me. His son, indeed, hath de-  
ath which he has doubtless sustained."

," stammered Pearson, "since your Excel-  
und I am right in suspending your order in  
stances, I trust you will not blame me in this  
ught it best to await more special orders."

art in a mighty merciful humour this morning,  
said Cromwell, not entirely satisfied.

ur Excellency please, the halter is ready, and  
provost-marshal."

, if such a bloody fellow as thou hast spared  
ould ill become me to destroy him," said the  
 . "But then, here is among Rochecliffe's papers  
agement of twenty desperadoes to take us off—  
ample ought to be made."

lord," said Zerubbabel, "consider, now, how  
is young man, Albert Lee, hath been near you,  
obably, quite close to your Excellency, in these  
ssages which he knew, and we did not. Had he  
an assassin's nature, it would have cost him but  
shot, and the light of Israel was extinguished.  
the unavoidable confusion which must have  
the sentinels quitting their posts, he might have  
ir chance of escape."

ough, Zerubbabel; he lives," said the Genera'  
*all remain in custody for some time, howeve*  
*ben banished from England. The other t*  
*f course; for you would not dream of consi*  
*altry fellows as fit victims for my revenge*

## WOODSTOCK.

w, the under-keeper, called Joliffe, deserves  
ver," said Pearson, "since he has frankly  
at he slew honest Joseph Tomkins."

erves a reward for saving us a labour," said  
"that Tomkins was a most double-hearted  
ave found evidence among these papers here,  
had lost the fight at Worcester, we should  
reason to regret that we had ever trusted  
mkins—it was only our success which antici-  
reachery—write us down debtor, not creditor,  
an you call him so, and to his quarterstaff."  
remains the sacrilegious and graceless cavalier  
oted your Excellency's life last night," said

said the General, "that were stooping too  
enge. His sword had no more power than  
usted with a tobacco-pipe. Eagles stoop not  
, or wild-drakes either."

r," said Pearson, "the fellow should be  
s a libeller. The quantity of foul and pesti-  
se which we found in his pockets makes me  
ould go altogether free—Please to look at

vile hand," said Oliver, as he looked at a  
o of our friend Wildrake's poetical miscel-  
he very handwriting seems to be drunk, and  
etry not sober—What have we here?

When I was a young lad,  
My fortune was bad—  
If e'er I do well, 'tis a wonder.—

iat trash is this?—and then again—

Now a plague on the poll  
Of old politic Noll!  
We will drink till we bring  
In triumph back the King

## WOODSTOCK.

In truth, if it could be done that way, this poet would be a stout champion. Give the poor knave five pieces, Pearson, and bid him go sell his ballads. If he come within twenty miles of our person, though, we will have him flogged till the blood runs down to his heels."

"There remains only one sentenced person," said Pearson, "a noble wolf-hound, finer than any your Excellency saw in Ireland. He belongs to the old knight Sir Henry Lee. Should your Excellency not desire to keep the fine creature yourself, might I presume to beg that I might have leave?"

"No, Pearson," said Cromwell; "the old man, so faithful himself, shall not be deprived of his faithful dog.—I would I had any creature, were it but a dog, that followed me, because it loved me, not for what it could make of me."

"Your Excellency is unjust to your faithful soldiers," said Zerubbabel, bluntly, "who follow you like dogs, fight for you like dogs, and have the grave of a dog on the spot where they happen to fall."

"How now, old grumbler," said the General, "what means this change of note?"

"Corporal Humgudgeon's remains are left to moulder under the ruins of yonder tower, and Tomkins is thrust into a hole in a thicket like a beast."

"True, true," said Cromwell; "they shall be removed to the churchyard, and every soldier shall attend with cockades of sea-green and blue ribbon—Every one of the non-commissioned officers and adjutators shall have a mourning scarf; we ourselves will lead the procession, and there shall be a proper dole of wine, burnt brandy, and rosemary. See that it is done, Pearson. After the funeral Woodstock shall be dismantled and destroyed, that its recesses may not again afford shelter to rebels and malignants."

The commands of the General were punctually obeyed.

## WOODSTOCK.

the other prisoners were dismissed, Albert Lee for some time in custody. He went abroad after *ation*, entered into King Charles's Guards, where promoted by that monarch. But his fate, as we see hereafter, only allowed him a short though career.

return to the liberation of the other prisoners from stock. The two divines, completely reconciled to other, retreated arm in arm to the parsonage-house, early the residence of Dr. Rochecliffe, but which he visited as the guest of his successor, Nehemiah Holdenough. The Presbyterian had no sooner installed his friend under his roof, than he urged upon him an offer to partake it, and the income annexed to it, as his own. Dr. Rochecliffe was much affected, but wisely rejected the generous offer, considering the difference of their tenets on Church government, which each entertained as religiously as his creed. Another debate, though a light one, on the subject of the office of Bishops in the Primitive Church, confirmed him in his resolution. They parted the next day, and their friendship remained undisturbed by controversy till Mr. Holdenough's death, in 1658 ; a harmony which might be in some degree owing to their never meeting again after their imprisonment. Dr. Rochecliffe was restored to his living after the Restoration, and ascended from thence to high clerical preferment.

The inferior personages of the grand jail-delivery at Woodstock Lodge easily found themselves temporary accommodations in the town among old acquaintance ; but no one ventured to entertain the old knight, understood to be so much under the displeasure of the ruling powers ; and even the innkeeper of the George, who had been one of his tenants, scarce dared to admit him to the common privileges of a traveller, who has food and lodging for his money. Everard attended him un-



BOOK.

also unforbidden. The hearted once more towards him behaved at the memorable saw that he was an object of favour, of Cromwell. But being which tended to reconsciousness that Everard's anxiety which he experienced who had not yet returned on an expedition. He felt that

unable to discover where he was in the late events, or to where he was taken into custody. He was in his service in making a statement he preferred the would not suspect the altered was afraid to make the proper name the name of Alice. They sat looking each other at the trampling of horses was at the door--There was a Alice, the subject of their She threw herself joyfully glanced his eye heedfully in a whisper, "Is all safe?" as I trust," replied Alice--

Everard--she blushed, was

Presbyterian cousin," said a tired smile; "he has himself

proved a confessor at least for loyalty, and ran the risk of being a martyr."

She pulled from her bosom the royal receipt, written on a small and soiled piece of paper, and tied round with a worsted thread instead of a seal. Such as it was, it

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## WOODSTOCK.

As he opened it pressed the little packet with veneration to his lips, to his heart, to his forehead and it was not before a tear had dropt on it that he had courage to open and read the billet. It was in words :—

LOYAL OUR MUCH ESTEEMED FRIEND, AND  
OUR TRUSTY SUBJECT,

It having become known to us that a purpose of marriage has been entertained betwixt Mrs. Alice Lee, your only daughter, and Markham Everard, Esq., of Worsley Chase, her kinsman, and by affiancy your nephew : And being assured that this match would be highly agreeable to you, had it not been for certain respects to our service, which induced you to refuse your consent thereto—We do therefore acquaint you, that, far from our affairs suffering by such an alliance, we do exhort, and so far as we may, require you to consent to the same, as you would wish to do us good pleasure, and greatly to advance our affairs. Leaving to you, nevertheless, as becometh a Christian King, the full exercise of your own discretion concerning other obstacles to such an alliance, which may exist, independent of those connected with our service. Witness our hand, together with our thankful recollections of your good services to our late Royal Father as well as ourselves,

“C. R.”

Long and steadily did Sir Henry gaze on the letter, so that it might almost seem as if he were getting it by heart. He then placed it carefully in his pocket-book, and asked Alice the account of her adventures of the preceding night. They were briefly told, Their midnight walk through the Chase had been speedily and safely accomplished. Nor had the King once made the slightest relapse into the naughty Louis Kerneguy. When she had seen

he had taken some  
parted. With the  
k was occupied by  
have led to danger,  
ore, did not attempt  
ourhood, inhabited  
e husband had been  
nd had fallen at the  
, a sensible woman,  
singular times had  
tagem and intrigue.  
out the mansion at  
prisoners dismissed  
ght's destination for  
to his mistress, and  
rseback to join her

ething meal made in  
rassed party, each  
nd at a loss how to  
gth the hour came  
etire to repose after  
her to the door of  
about to take leave,  
ked him to return,  
the King's letter to  
during the perusal :

... might have been ... or aught short of the  
utmost delight in the reading, the commands of the King  
himself should be disobeyed, rather than Alice should be  
sacrificed to one who received not her hand as the greatest  
blessing earth had to bestow. But the features of Ever-  
ard indicated joyful hope, even beyond what the father  
could have anticipated, yet mingled with surprise ; and  
when he raised his eye to the knight's with timidity and  
doubt, a smile was on Sir Henry's countenance as if

## WOODSTOCK.

ance. "The King," he said, "had he no other in England, should dispose at will of those of the Lee. But methinks the family of Everard have so devoted of late to the crown as to comply with the mandate, inviting its heir to marry the daughter of Edgar."

"The daughter of Sir Henry Lee," said Everard, "going to his uncle, and perforce kissing his hand, would grace the house of a duke."

"The girl is well enough," said the knight, proudly; "for myself, my poverty shall neither shame nor encroach on my friends. Some few pieces I have by Doctor Checliffe's kindness, and Joceline and I will strike out for nothing."

"Nay, my dear uncle, you are richer than you think for," said Everard. "That part of your estate, which my father redeemed for payment of a moderate composition, is still your own, and held by trustees in your name, myself being one of them. You are only our debtor for an advance of monies, for which, if it will content you, we will count with you like usurers. My father is incapable of profiting by making a bargain on his own account for the estate of a distressed friend; and all this you would have learned long since, but that you would not—I mean, time did not serve for explanation—I mean"—

"You mean I was too hot to hear reason, Mark, and I believe it is very true. But I think we understand each other *now*. To-morrow I go with my family to Kingston, where is an old house I may still call mine. Come thither at thy leisure, Mark,—or thy best speed, as thou wilt—but come with thy father's consent."

"With my father in person," said Everard, "if you will permit."

"Be that," answered the knight, "as he and you will—I think Joceline will scarce shut the door in thy face, or



## WOODSTOCK.

g. highly the proposal to deliver up the considered as an insult to his honour, such advances, and became, on the pinion, which was now generally prevalent, that a settled government could not be the recall of the banished family. There he personal kindness which he had received, rendered him the more readily discomfiture. He was peremptory, however, engagements during Oliver's life, whose word was too firmly fixed to be shaken by could be formed against it.

Wildrake continued to be Everard's pro- as before, though sometimes the cost a little to his inconvenience. That on, indeed, while he remained stationary use, or that of the old knight, discharged in the family, and won Alice's heart by the children, teaching the boys, of whom to ride, fence, toss the pike, and many and, above all, filling up a great blank stence, with whom he played at chess and, or read Shakspeare, or was clerk to any sequestered divine ventured to read the Church. Or he found game for him the gentleman continued to go a-sporting; and, led over the storming of Brentford, and the hill, Banbury, Roundway-down, and which the aged cavalier delighted in, but that sowed well enter upon with Colonel Everard, his laurels in the Parliament service.

which he received from Wildrake's more necessary, after Sir Henry was gallant and only son, who was slain in the of Dunkirk, where, unhappily, English lay on both the contending sides. the

## WOODSTOCK.

French being then allied with Oliver, who sent to their aid a body of auxiliaries, and the troops of the banished King fighting in behalf of the Spaniards. Sir Henry received the melancholy news like an old man, that is, with more external composure than could have been anticipated. He dwelt for weeks and months on the lines forwarded by the indefatigable Dr. Rochecliffe, superscribed in small letters, C.R., and subscribed Louis Kerneguy, in which the writer conjured him to endure this inestimable loss with the greater firmness, that he had still left one son (intimating himself) who would always regard him as a father.

But, in spite of this balsam, sorrow, acting imperceptibly; and sucking the blood like a vampire, seemed gradually drying up the springs of life; and, without any formed illness or outward complaint, the old man's strength and vigour gradually abated, and the ministry of Wildrake proved daily more indispensable.

It was not, however, always to be had. The cavalier was one of those happy persons whom a strong constitution, an unreflecting mind, and exuberant spirits, enabled to play through their whole lives the part of a schoolboy—happy for the moment, and careless of consequences.

Once or twice every year, when he had collected a few pieces, the Cavaliero Wildrake made a start to London, where, as he described it, he went on the ramble, drank as much wine as he could come by, and led a *skeldering* life, to use his own phrase, among roystering cavaliers like himself, till by some rash speech or wild action he got into the Marshalsea, the Fleet, or some other prison, from which he was to be delivered at the expense of *interest, money, and sometimes a little reputation.*

*At length Cromwell died, his son resigned the government, and the various changes which followed induced Everard, as well as many others, to adopt more active measures in the King's behalf. Everard even remitted*

## WOODSTOCK.

he sums for his service, but with the utmost  
and corresponding with no intermediate agent,  
he Chancellor himself, to whom he communi-  
cated such useful information upon public affairs. With  
prudence he was very nearly engaged in the in-  
evitable rising of Booth and Middleton in the west,  
with great difficulty escaped from the fatal conse-  
quences of that ill-timed attempt. After this, although  
the state of the kingdom was trebly unsettled, yet no  
seemed to turn up favourable to the royal cause,  
the movement of General Monk from Scotland.  
And then, it was when at the point of complete success,  
the fortunes of Charles seemed at a lower ebb than  
before, especially when intelligence had arrived at the little  
court which he then kept in Brussels, that Monk, on  
arriving in London, had put himself under the orders of  
the Parliament.

It was at this time, and in the evening, while the King,  
Buckingham, Wilmot, and some other gallants of his  
wandering Court, were engaged in a convivial party, that  
the Chancellor (Clarendon) suddenly craved audience,  
and, entering with less ceremony than he would have  
done at another time, announced extraordinary news.  
For the messenger, he said, he could say nothing, saving  
that he appeared to have drunk much, and slept little ;  
but that he had brought a sure token of credence from a  
man for whose faith he would venture his life. The  
King demanded to see the messenger himself.

A man entered with something the manners of a gentle-  
man, and more those of a rakehell debauchee—his eyes  
swelled and inflamed—his gait disordered and stumbling,  
partly through lack of sleep, partly through the means he  
had taken to support his fatigue. He staggered without  
ceremony to the head of the table, seized the King's hand,  
*which he mumbled like a piece of gingerbread ; while*  
*Charles, who began to recollect him from his mode of*



somehow somewhat tarnished, as much brass on the b  
nearly as much copper in the metal "

## WOODSTOCK.

our Majesty would entrust this messenger with me, to get the truth out of him," said

your Grace," replied the King ; " but he has all as yourself, and such seldom agree. My Chancellor hath wisdom, and to that we must trust. —Master Wildrake, you will go with my Lord Mor, who will bring us a report of your tidings ; me, I assure you that you shall be no loser for the first messenger of good news." So saying, he gave a signal to the Chancellor to take away Wildrake, whom he judged, in his present humour, to be not un-  
able to communicate some former passages at Woodstock which might rather entertain than edify the wits of court.

Confirmation of the joyful intelligence soon arrived, and Wildrake was presented with a handsome gratuity and small pension, which, by the King's special desire, was a duty whatever attached to it.

Shortly afterwards, all England was engaged in chorus to his favourite ditty—

Oh, the twenty-ninth of May,  
It was a glorious day,  
When the King did enjoy his own again.

On that memorable day the King prepared to make a progress from Rochester to London, with a reception on the part of his subjects so unanimously cordial, as that him say gaily, it must have been his own fault to go so long away from a country where his arrival gave much joy. On horseback, betwixt his brothers, the Duke of York and Gloucester, the restored Monarch moved slowly over roads strewn with flowers—by conduits of wine, under triumphal arches, and through streets hung with tapestry. There were citizens in various dresses, some arrayed in coats of black velvet, with gold



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## WOODSTOCK.

his wife, a buxom matron as she had been a maiden, laughed at her own consequence; and anon joined her shrill notes to the stentorian which her husband added to the general excla-

fine boys and two pretty girls prattled around grandfather, who made them such answers as their age, and repeatedly passed his withered over the fair locks of the little darlings, while assisted by Wildrake (blazing in a splendid dress, eyes washed with only a single cup of canary), the children's attention from time to time, lest would weary their grandfather. We must not see other remarkable figure in the group—a dog, which bore the signs of being at the end of canine life, being perhaps fifteen or sixteen years old. But though exhibiting the ruin only of his appearance, his eyes dim, his joints stiff, his head bowed down, and his gallant carriage and graces exchanged for a stiff, rheumatic, hobbling noble hound had lost none of his instinctive devotion for his master. To lie by Sir Henry's feet in summer or by the fire in winter, to raise his head on him, to lick his withered hand or his shrieking from time to time, seemed now all that was left for him.

Four or five livery servants attended to protect this venerable man from the thronging multitude; but it needed not. His respectability and unpretending simplicity of appearance gave them, even in the eyes of the vulgar, an air of patriarchal dignity, which commanded general regard; and they sat upon the ground, which they had chosen for their station by the castle, as undisturbed as if they had been in their

As the distant clarions announced the Royal



## WOODSTOCK.

push, extended to the King, over his  
er, a hand as broad and hard as a wooden  
ch the King filled with gold coins. "Buy  
for my friend Phoebe with some of these,"  
as; "she too has been doing her duty to Old

ing then turned once more to the knight, who  
making an effort to speak. He took his aged  
both his own, and stooped his head towards him  
ch his accents, while the old man, detaining him  
the other hand, said something faltering, of which  
les could only catch the quotation—

"Unthread the rude eye of rebellion,  
And welcome home again discarded faith."

Extricating himself, therefore, as gently as possible,  
from a scene which began to grow painfully embarrass-  
ing, the good-natured King said, speaking with unusual  
distinctness to insure the old man's comprehending him,  
"This is something too public a place for all we have to  
say. But if you come not soon to see King Charles at  
Whitehall, he will send down Louis Kerneuguy to visit  
you, that you may see how rational that mischievous lad  
is become since his travels."

So saying, he once more pressed affectionately the old  
man's hand, bowed to Alice and all around, and with-  
drew; Sir Henry Lee listening with a smile, which  
showed he comprehended the gracious tendency of  
what had been said. The old man leaned back on his  
seat, and muttered the *Nunc dimittas*.

"Excuse me for having made you wait, my lords,"  
said the King, as he mounted his horse; "Indeed, had  
it not been for these good folks, you might have waited  
for me long enough to little purpose.—Move on, sirs."

The array moved on accordingly; the sound of trum-  
pets and drums again rose amid the acclamations, which



## DUCTION AND NOTES.

*For the convenience and advantage of the reader, the Author's original Introduction has been slightly abridged, and is now amongst the "Notes," of which in reality it is not unimportant part.*

### INTRODUCTION.

THE busy period of the great Civil War was one in which the character and genius of different parties were most brilliantly displayed, and, accordingly, the incidents which place on either side were of a striking and extraordinary character, and afforded ample foundation for fictitious composition. The Author had in some measure attempted such in "Veril of the Peak"; but the scene was in a remote part of the kingdom, and mingled with other national differences, which left him still at liberty to glean another harvest out of so rich a store.

In these circumstances, some wonderful adventures which happened at Woodstock in the year 1649, occurred to him, although he had long ago read of, although he was unable to find where, and of which the hint appeared sufficient, although, it might have been much better handled if the Author, in the lapse of time, lost everything like an accurate recollection of the real story.

It was not until about this period, namely 1831, that the Author, being called upon to write this Introduction, obtained a full account of what really happened upon the marvellous occasion in question, in a work termed "The Every-day Book," edited by Mr. Hone, and full of curious antiquarian research, the object being to give a variety of original information concerning manners illustrated by curious instances, rarely to be elsewhere. Among other matter, Mr. Hone quotes a letter from the British Magazine for 1747, in the following words, which the Author had formerly perused, although he was unable to



## INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

refer to the source of his information. The tract is entitled, "The Genuine History of the Good Devil of Woodstock, famous in the world, in the year 1649, and never accounted for, or at all understood to this time."

The teller of this "genuine history" proceeds verbatim as follows:—

"Some original papers having lately fallen into my hands, under the name of 'Authentic Memoirs of the Memorable Joseph Collins of Oxford, commonly known by the name of Funny Joe, and now intended for the press,' I was extremely delighted to find in them a circumstantial and unquestionable account of the most famous of all invisible agents, so well known in the year 1649, under the name of the Good Devil of Woodstock, and even adored by the people of that place, for the vexation and distress it occasioned some people they were not much pleased with. As this famous story, though related by a thousand people, and attested in all its circumstances, beyond all possibility of doubt, by people of rank, learning, and reputation, of Oxford and the adjacent towns, has never yet been generally accounted for, or at all understood, and is perfectly explained, in a manner that can admit of no doubt, in these papers, I could not refuse my readers the pleasure it gave me in reading."

There is, therefore, no doubt that, in the year 1649, a number of incidents, supposed to be supernatural, took place at the King's palace of Woodstock, which the Commissioners of Parliament were then and there endeavouring to dilapidate and destroy.

At the risk of prolonging a curious quotation, I include a page from Mr. Hone's "Every-day Book."

"November 1.—Candles were placed in all parts of the room, and a great fire made. At midnight, the candles all yet burning, a noise like the burst of a cannon was heard in the room, and the burning billets were tossed all over the room and about the beds; and had not their honours called in Giles and his fellows, the house had assuredly been burnt. An hour after the candles went out, as usual, the clack of many cannon was heard, and many pailfuls of green stinking water were thrown on their honours in bed; great stones were also thrown in as before, the bed curtains and bedsteads torn and broken: the windows were now all really broken, and the whole neighbourhood alarmed with the noises; nay, the very rabbit-stealers, that

## TO WOODSTOCK.

at night in the warren, were so frightened at  
ndering, that they fled for fear, and left their  
them.

their honours this night spoke, and in the name of  
what it was, and why it disturbed them so? No  
given to this, but the noise ceased for a while, when  
ame again, and, as they all agreed, brought with it  
ils worse than itself. One of the servants now lighted  
candle and set it in the doorway between the two  
s, to see what passed; and as he watched it, he plainly  
roof striking the candle and candlestick into the middle  
room, and afterwards making three scrapes over the snuff  
candle, to scrape it out. Upon this, the same person  
so bold as to draw a sword; but he had scarce got it out,  
an he perceived another invisible hand had hold of it too, and  
lled with him for it, and at last prevailing, struck him so  
olently on the head with the pommel, that he fell down for  
ead with the blow. At this instant was heard another burst  
like the discharge of the broadside of a ship of war, and at about  
a minute or two's distance each, no less than nineteen more such:  
these shook the house so violently, that they expected every  
moment it would fall upon their heads. The neighbours on this  
were all alarmed, and, running to the house, they all joined in  
prayer and psalm-singing, during which the noise continued in  
the other rooms, and the discharge of cannon without though  
nobody was there."

It was the object of neither of the great political parties of that  
day to discredit the narrative, which gave great satisfaction both  
to the cavaliers and roundheads; the former conceiving that the  
license given to the demons was in consequence of the impious  
desecration of the King's furniture and apartments, so that the  
citizens of Woodstock almost adored the supposed spirits, as  
avengers of the cause of royalty; while the friends of the Parlia-  
ment, on the other hand, imputed to the malice of the fiend the  
obstruction of the pious work, as they judged that which they  
had in hand.

To show how great men are sometimes deceived, we may  
recur to a tract, entitled "The Secret History of the Good Devil  
of Woodstock," in which we find it, under the author's own  
hand, that he, Joseph Collins, commonly called Funny Joe, was  
himself this very devil;—that, under the feigned name of Giles

## INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

Sharp, he hired himself as a servant to the Commissioners :—that, by the help of two friends—an unknown trapdoor in the ceiling of the bed-chamber, and a pound of common gunpowder—he played all these extraordinary tricks by himself ;—that his fellow-servants, whom he had introduced on purpose to assist him, had lifted up their own beds, and that the candles were contrived, by a common trick of gunpowder, to be extinguished at a certain time.

The dog who began the farce was, as Joe swore, no dog at all, but truly a bitch, who had shortly before whelped in that room, and made all this disturbance in seeking for her puppies ; and which, when she had served his purpose, he (Joe Sharp, or Collins) let out, and then looked for. The story of the hoof and sword he himself bore witness to, and was never suspected as to the truth of them, though mere fictions. By the trap-door his friends let down stones, fagots, glass, water, etc., which they either left there, or drew up again, as best suited his purpose ; and by this way let themselves in and out, without opening the doors, or going through the keyholes : and all the noises described, he declares he made by placing quantities of white gunpowder over pieces of burning charcoal, on plates of tin, which, as they melted, exploded with a violent noise.

I am very happy in having an opportunity of setting history right about these remarkable events, and would not have the reader disbelieve my author's account of them, from his naming either white gunpowder exploding when melted, or his making the earth about the pot take fire of its own accord ; since, however improbable these accounts may appear to some readers, and whatever secrets they might be in Joe's time, they are now well known in chemistry. As to the last, there needs only to mix an equal quantity of iron filings, finely powdered, and powder of pure brimstone, and make them into a paste with fair water. This paste, when it hath lain together about twenty-six hours, will of itself take fire, and burn all the sulphur away with a blue flame and a bad smell. For the others, what he calls white gunpowder is plainly the thundering powder called by our chemists *pulvis fulminans*. It is composed of three parts of saltpetre, two parts of pearl ashes or salt of tartar, and one part of flour of *brimstone*, mixed together and beat to a fine powder ; a small quantity of this held on the point of a knife over a candle will not go off till it melt, and then it gives a report like that of a pistol ; and this he might easily dispose of in larger quantities, so as to

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## TO WOODSTOCK.

of itself, while he, the said Joe, was with his

xplanation of the ghostly adventures of Wood-  
rred by Mr. Hone from the pages of the old  
: Authentic Memoirs of the memorable Joseph  
rd, whose courage and loyalty were the only  
injured up those strange and surprising appar-  
of spirits, which passed as unquestionable in the  
amentary Commissioners, of Dr. Plot, and other  
. The pulvis fulminans, the secret principle he  
ow known to every apothecary's apprentice.

r be not treacherous, the actor of these wonders  
skill in fireworks upon the following remarkable  
Commissioners had not, in their zeal for the  
erlooked their own private interests, and a deed  
on parchment, recording the share and nature  
s which they privately agreed to concede to each  
ne time, they were, it seems, loath to intrust to  
number the keeping of a document in which all  
icerned.

written agreement within a flower-pot, in which  
d it from the eyes of any chance spectator. But  
e apparitions having gone abroad, curiosity drew  
ghbours to Woodstock, and some in particular,  
nowledge of this agreement would have afforded  
d; as the Commissioners received these guests  
ere the flower-pot was placed, a match was sud-  
e fireworks placed there by Sharp the secretary.  
urst to pieces with the concussion, or was pre-  
plode of itself, and the contract of the Commis-  
testimony to their private roguery, was thrown  
f the visitors assembled. If I have recollected  
urately—for it is more than forty years since I  
ct—it is probable, that in omitting it from the  
o have passed over, from want of memory, other  
ight have made an essential addition to the story.  
, is more certain, than that incidents which are  
infinite advantage in works of this nature over  
ious. The tree, however, must remain where it

on to be in London in October 1831, I made  
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a species of luxury  
extravagance, and  
supper took place  
latest—the rare-supper  
which made its ap-  
pearance for prolong

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by the Parlia

... among the people. When Charles II. appointed Sir  
Thomas Lunsford to the situation of Lord Lieutenant of the  
county, the celebrated John Lillburn takes to himself the credit  
of having kindled the public hatred against this officer and Lord Digby,  
less brave than of the most bloody-minded description,  
whom the people were to expect nothing but bloodshed  
and massacre. Of Sir Thomas Lunsford, in particular, it was  
said that his favourite food was the flesh of children, and  
he was painted like an ogre in the act of cutting a child into  
and broiling them.

#### THE FAMILISTS—p. 450.

Familists were originally founded by David George of  
an enthusiast, who believed himself the Messiah. They  
divided off into various sects of Grindletonians, Familists of  
the Mountains, of the Valleys: Familists of Cape Order, etc.  
of the Scattered Flock, etc. etc. Among doctrines too  
ridiculous to be quoted, they held the lawfulness of occa-  
sional nonconformity with any predominant sect when it suited their  
convenience, of complying with the order of any magistrate, or  
of any power, however sinful. They disowned the principal  
doctrines of Christianity as a law which had been superseded  
by the advent of David George—nay, obeyed the wildest and  
unrestrained dictates of evil passions, and are said to have practised  
themselves the grossest libertinism.

#### SIGNAL OF DANGER—p. 497.

On a particular occasion a lady, suspecting, by the passage of  
a party of guards through her estate, that the arrest of her  
husband, Patrick Home of Polwarth, afterwards first Earl  
of Home, was intended, she immediately sent a messenger to  
warn him of the danger.



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